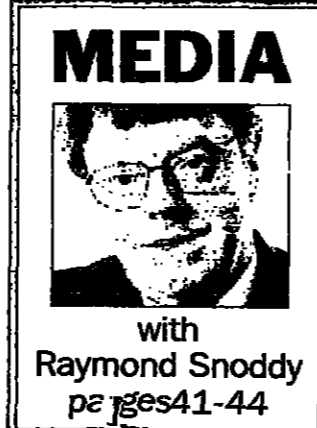




Seduction and a baby



MEDIA with Raymond Snoddy pages 41-44



IN THE TIMES ON SATURDAY Gloria Estefan Queen of Miami MAGAZINE PLUS Boys in trunks WEEKEND

Why were we not told, asks Straw

Home Office knew about Bell book

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

A GOVERNMENT inquiry was underway last night after Jack Straw disclosed that Home Office officials knew two years ago that Mary Bell was assisting in a book about her life.

The Home Secretary ordered the investigation after discovering that although the probation service, Home Office officials and the Official Solicitor knew about the plan, politicians were not told.

Mr Straw announced the inquiry after meeting June Richardson, the mother of one of Bell's victims, and as leading book chains in Bell's home town of Newcastle said that they would not sell the book, *Cries Unheard*.

At the same time, the Press Complaints Commission began an investigation into a possible breach of its Code of Practice over payments by *The Times* to the publishers for the serialisation of Gitta Sereny's book. The commission has also received about a hundred complaints from the public over alleged harassment by reporters who besieged Bell's home in southern England and forced her to flee with her 14-year-old daughter. But the commission cannot act on these calls unless it receives a formal complaint from Bell or her representatives.

Bell's daughter became aware that her mother was a double killer only when they fled the house in the early hours of Wednesday morning. Ms Sereny said last night that Bell had hoped to avoid telling her child the truth until she was 12. She said the Bell and her child were now receiving help at a secret location.

Ms Sereny also said that she had warned Bell about the consequences of going ahead with the book and had advised her to go to a psychiatrist instead. Bell had "a great desire to open herself, to reach inside herself" and was determined to do the book.

Just days after condemning payments to Bell for collaborating with Ms Sereny, Mr Straw found himself in the embarrassing position of having to admit that Home Office



Straw met mother of one of the victims

civil servants had known about the book for two years. Mr Straw said that he had looked at the Home Office file on Bell yesterday and found that Durham probation service and officials in the Home Office had known about it. He asked David Ormand, the permanent secretary, to find out what happened and why his predecessor Michael Howard had not been informed.

"I very deeply regret that this information was not passed on to the then Home Secretary, Michael Howard. It is deeply regrettable that profits will be made out of this sorry episode. It is equally regrettable that Mary Bell's daughter should suffer because of the irresponsible actions of others." He said that he had known of the plan he would have advised Bell and her daughter that it would put them under great pressure.

The Home Office first became aware of the book in March 1996 when its Parole and Lifer group received information from Durham Probation Service about the proposal. It is understood the information was passed to the group — the officials who monitor life sentence prisoners released on licence — was by a probation officer who was in regular contact with Bell.

Officials were aware that a contract had been drawn but did not focus on the question of payment to Bell, because the law was never intended to cover the circumstances in which she received payment

from Gitta Sereny. Instead officials looked at the proposal from the point of view of maintaining the anonymity of Bell's daughter. The Official Solicitor, who represents the interests of the child, was contacted by officials and later received a guarantee from Ms Sereny that the book would not breach injunctions protecting the child's identity.

Last night Ann Widdecombe, who was prisons minister at the time, criticised the failure of officials to inform ministers. "If a matter was likely to have political implications for ministers, we should automatically have been informed. We could have made further inquiries and asked Mary Bell whether she understood the implications for her anonymity and, in particular, the effects on her daughter. "Could there be anything more awful than finding out in the middle of the night that your mother is a double child killer?"

The Press Complaints Commission will consider whether *The Times* has breached Clause 16 of its Code of Practice which bans payments to agents or associates — including family, friends and colleagues — of convicted criminals unless it is in the public interest.

Lord Wakeham, the commission chairman, told the House of Lords: "Both payments to convicted criminals, directly or indirectly, and harassment by journalists are serious breaches of the PCC Code of Conduct. I can confirm that we have received a complaint. We are conducting an investigation."

A spokeswoman for *The Times* said that no letter had yet been received from the commission about the serialisation.

In the Commons the Attorney-General, John Morris, QC, pleaded for Bell's daughter to be protected from "press frenzy or mob rule."

Cries Unheard, pages 20, 21
Leading article and Letters, page 25
Media, page 41



Karen Rogers beat thousands to a place with the England team in France

World Cup Karen is on the ball

BY STEPHEN FARRELL

MILLIONS of teenagers destined to get no closer to the World Cup than an engaged tone on the ticket hotline will watch enviously next month as devoted England fan Karen Rogers runs out on the same football pitch as her heroes.

Karen, 14, from Warsash in Hampshire, was chosen to be a ball girl for England's match against Colombia after writing a prizewinning 250-word essay about Euro 96.

Karen was one of thousands to enter a young journalist competition organised by BBC Newsround and Radio Times.

She was shortlisted on the strength of her essay and then had to conduct an interview and present a piece before camera.

Last night Karen, who will also visit Disneyland Paris during her four-day stay in France, was delighted at the prospect of meeting her favourite players at a training session. "I am especially looking forward to meeting David Beckham — he is really good looking and a great player. I think England might even win the World Cup."

Summer of sport, page 7
Football, pages 52, 56



"Will you tell him England have chosen a mascot, or shall I?"

IRA chiefs edge towards peace but hang on to their guns

BY MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE IRA enraged Unionists by ruling out disarmament yesterday, but opened the way for Sinn Fein to endorse Good Friday's peace agreement. Gerry Adams appealed for calm. "What do people expect the IRA to say?" he asked.

Unionists were further unnerved by a 700 lb car bomb left in the middle of Lisburn, Co Antrim, which the Army made safe with controlled explosions. Security sources blamed republicans opposed to the peace process.

The IRA, in its first formal response to the agreement, said that while the deal fell short of republican objectives it represented a "significant development" that could transform the situation.

On Sunday week Sinn Fein holds a conference at which Mr Adams is expected to seek support for the agreement and an end to the party's abstentionist policy so it can sit in Northern Ireland's new assembly. The IRA said republicans should be guided "by their own view and the advice of their political leaders".

Mitchel McLaughlin, the party's chairman, called the statement in *Republican News* encouraging. "We could have had a different statement from the IRA and we must welcome the fact that we didn't," he said. "Let's not jump too many bridges at the moment."

The import of the IRA's statement was largely eclipsed by its defiant declaration on disarmament. "Let us make it clear there will be no decommissioning by the IRA," it said. "This issue, as with any other affecting the IRA, its functions and objectives, is a

matter only for the IRA, to be decided upon and pronounced upon by us."

Unionists and Conservatives said that amounted to a rejection of the agreement, which requires all parties to "reaffirm their commitment to the total disarmament of all paramilitary organisations" and to "use any influence they may have to achieve the decommissioning of all paramilitary arms within two years".

David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist Party leader, and William Hague, the opposition leader, both insisted that a failure to disarm should preclude not only Sinn Fein's participation in Northern Ireland's new government but the release of republican prisoners. "You can't say there's a peace agreement if some party has a private army armed to the teeth ready for action," Mr Trimble said.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, said decommissioning was an "essential" part of the package, but some government officials privately suggested the IRA's stand on decommissioning was designed primarily to reassure its hardliners.

A Downing Street spokesman said the crucial dates were Sinn Fein's conference and the May 22 referendum on the agreement. They were "rather more important than a line in a piece in *Republican News* of the sort you might expect as Sinn Fein runs up to their meeting".

The key question is what Continued on page 2, col 3

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Beckett fought nuclear deal

BY JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MARGARET BECKETT tried more than a dozen times to block the controversial deal to receive nuclear shipments from Georgia at Dounreay, it emerged last night.

Mrs Beckett, the President of the Board of Trade, and John Battle, the Energy Minister, are said to have had a bitter row with Robin Cook about it and Mrs Beckett is believed to have signed the licence only because she

feared that her department would lose out on a separate deal to bail out British coal mines. She is also said to have demanded that the Foreign Office take any "flak" from the announcement.

Ministerial sources said that Mrs Beckett had been mainly concerned about the proposal to go against the government policy that nuclear material should be reprocessed only if it is later returned to its country of source. Other ministers were said to have backed her during Cabinet committee meet-

ings, but Mr Cook's position prevailed.

The dispute centred on 5 kg of fresh and spent highly enriched uranium fuel which had been held at a civil research reactor in Tbilisi in Georgia. America asked Britain to help out and both the Foreign Office and Downing Street believed the fuel should be reprocessed at Dounreay to ensure that it did not get into terrorist hands.

Mrs Beckett thought the fuel could be safely handled by Dounreay, but believed that

Continued on page 2, col 7

Brown to prepare for switch to the euro

BY PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

BRITAIN will today back the admission of 11 countries to the European single currency when it is launched on January 1 next year, Gordon Brown said last night.

The Chancellor also surprised some MPs by announcing that an outline "national changeover plan" to prepare for a possible move from the pound to the euro would be drawn up this year. He main-

tained that Britain would be in a position to make a final decision on entry early in the next Parliament.

The changeover plan, criticised by the Tories, will set out the practical measures that will have to be taken if Britain decides to join. A summit of heads of government will set the seal tomorrow on monetary union, the most important development in the EU since it was founded.

Gloom or glory, page 7

Camra may move lock, stock and barrels to France

BY ROBIN YOUNG

BRITAIN'S "biggest pub" is likely to be moved to France. In what would surely be the ultimate protest against Britain's rates of excise duty, the Campaign for Real Ale (Camra) is planning to move the Great British Beer Festival across the Channel to Calais.

The event attracts some 40,000

of pounds because the duty on a pint of beer is little more than 4p in France compared with 32p in Britain.

The proposal to move the festival to Calais was raised at Camra annual meeting in Edinburgh last weekend and now the group's executive is investigating further. Ben Wardle, a Camra spokesman, said: "Moving the Great British Beer Festival to France is a very real possibility. It is not a step

beer drinker to enjoy a good cheap pint. We answer only to them. If the British Government forces us out of the country with its exorbitant taxes, then we will fight back. We will make a stand for British beer on the beaches of France."

Camra believes the tax savings would more than offset the cost of shipping the beer over the Channel. Mr Wardle said: "We could still save

mean a saving in excess of £50,000."

Yesterday, French tourist officers said they would be delighted to play host to the Great British Beer Festival. Francoise Ballyuof of the Calais tourist board, enthused: "We would welcome it with open arms."

But the Treasury said: "The Government is not forcing the Great British Beer Festival out of Britain. It is up to Camra where they hold the event.

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RICKY BENDS
VTRV

Peers ponder the etiquette of losing their Garter

In Commons bars, MPs may discuss skirt. In the Other Place yesterday, peers discussed garter. Or Garter. For it emerged that Garter is a sort of nickname given to the Garter King of Arms, the chap who, dressed in a gaudy hearthrug, prances about at Ceremonies of Introduction when new peers take their places. His name is Peter Gwynn-Jones. In other workplaces, pals might call him Pete. But peers call him Garter.

Peers start addressing each other as Families, Jockstrap or Special Cleavage Bra? To summon Lord Mowbray, do mates shout "Oi, Eyespatch!" Is Lady Trumpington code-named 42-DD?

The subject of the debate was a select committee's proposals for reform of the Ceremony of Introduction, removing much of the kowtowing, writing Garter out of the script, and modernising to no obvious purpose beyond enabling new Labour to press release news that Cool Britannia now extends to

Wicked Ermine and Bad Woollack.

Peers were reconciled to reduced flummery but lamented the loss of Garter. This was not Lord Richard's view. The Leader of the House, who gorges on vintage port and might better be dubbed Cigar, acknowledged work done "behind the scenes" by Garter but wondered if we needed to see him.

The ceremony would still provide "a good day out for family and friends". Relieved bishops learnt that they could



still wear their robes. Reform, said Cigar, was "a very small but perhaps important piece of history".

Carpet Slippers disagreed. Some may know this decent Tory former knight, who slightly fails to set the pulse racing, as Lord Dean of Harptree. He breathes calm and carpet-slippers. Carpet-Slippers saw a role for Garter.

So did Plumed Hat: Lord Waddington, lately Governor of Bermuda, thought this move, after only 377 years, "indecent haste". But String Vest (plainspeaking Lord Ellis-Thomas, a former Plaid Cymru MP) had found his own Introduction "degrading and objectionable". Specs (the Archbishop of Canterbury) slid out. Slip-On Shoes

thought the compromise reasonable.

Lord Rodgers of Quarry Bank (Bill, a former SDP type) is a bit of a smoothie, somewhere between typewriter mechanic and lounge lizard. He thought that hats worn at Introductions so obscured faces that new peers might never be recognised.

Next on her feet was Beads. The Baroness Lockwood, in mauve jacket and orange necklace, defended reform. The toothbrush-moustached Duke of Norfolk (Tache) defended Garter. Red Socks

(Lord Cranborne) listened attentively, but Silk Dressing-Gown was absent—sadly, for Lord St John of Fawsley loves this sort of thing. Hair Oil was there: Lord (Kenneth) Baker of Dorking looked, as ever, amused.

I left after the Bishop of Norwich had spoken. Dog Collar, reviewing the theory that the three bows in the Ceremony represented the Trinity, caravassed the suggestion that ten more might honour the Ten Commandments too. Lord Bradwell (Tom Driberg) has passed

away, I mused. Y-Fronts, who made a pass at anything in trousers except men with beards (the reason many Labour MPs grew beards) could have added seven further bows: one for each Deadly Sin.

Dog collar said that he and Top Hat (Earl Ferrers) had recently communicated by telephone from respective hospital beds. "I assured him of my prayers. He sent me champagne. It seemed to me a model of what a good relationship between Church and State should be."

Internet hunt to pay back victims of Nazis

BY POLLY NEWTON, POLITICAL REPORTER

THE Government yesterday named on the Internet thousands of foreign nationals and businesses whose assets were confiscated by Britain during the Second World War.

Their identities were published to encourage claims for compensation from victims of Nazi Germany or its allies. All were residents of Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, Japan and Romania who deposited money in the United Kingdom before the war.

The money was appropriated by the British Government under the 1939 Trading with the Enemy Act, which was aimed at preventing the Germans and their allies from using the assets to fund their own war effort. Those who suffered financial losses and can prove that they were victims of Nazi persecution will be offered reparations "where practicable".

The website was announced by Margaret Beckett, the President of the Board of Trade, who said that each name would be accompanied by an address and details of the property seized. Although the information is the same as that already available at the

Public Records Office, the Government wants to make it more easily accessible.

Mrs Beckett said that an independent adviser would be appointed to help with the administration of the scheme. The Government agreed in principle earlier this year to make the repayments, after pressure from campaigners.

A total of £367 million was confiscated from foreign nationals by the British under the Trading with the Enemy Act. Of that, £334 million was returned after the war.

Most of the £33 million retained by the Government was used to repay British creditors, so new money will have to be found to compensate future claimants. A fund of £2 million has been set up; more will be made available if necessary. The sole piece of confiscated property held by the Government is a bracelet.

Further names will be posted on the Net this year, including people from Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Poland.

The website can be found at www.enemyproperty.gov.uk. There is a helpline open in office hours: 0171-215 6374 or 0171-215 6160.



Senator George Mitchell, the US negotiator, with his family on their first visit to Northern Ireland yesterday

Continued from page 1 happens after the June 25 assembly elections in which Sinn Féin could win about 16 of the 108 seats and two Cabinet places. Despite Unionist insistence on prior IRA disarmament, and government reassurances that decommissioning should begin straight away, the assembly's pledge of office requires only a commitment to "non-violence and exclu-

IRA arms

sively peaceful and democratic means". Tony Blair echoed that formula yesterday when he insisted that "people who serve in the government of Northern Ireland have to give up violence".

The IRA's line on decommissioning

boosted the agreement's Unionist opponents just when Mr Trimble appeared to be prevailing. Jeffrey Donaldson, the UUP MP, said it "gives the lie to any pretence that this is a peace deal". Ian Paisley, the Democratic Unionist party leader, said the IRA was warning the Government.

Leading article, page 25

Beckett

Continued from page 1 the Foreign Office did not put enough pressure on the Georgians to accept the material back once it had been reprocessed, even if this happened several years later.

Asked about his department's reaction to the deal, Mr Beckett said: "Questions have always to be asked as policy is prepared, but there is no doubt that accepting this fuel contributes to international nuclear non-proliferation. I think this was the right decision. I am absolutely convinced it is in safe hands at Dounreay. It is much safer there than anywhere else in the world."

A Foreign Office spokesman said that it was the Government's collective decision to go ahead with the shipment. And the DTI tried to play down the rift between Mrs Beckett and Mr Cook, saying that the two departments had worked closely with each other on the issue. "Robin Cook and Margaret Beckett are close colleagues and a longstanding political association. It was a government decision to which both ministers agreed."

The Liberal Democrats nevertheless called for the Commons Trade and Industry select committee to investigate the Government's handling of the issue. Matthew Taylor, the party's environment spokesman, demanded: "Why did ministers try to cover up these concerns, just as they failed to tell us that the Chief Constable responsible for the security at Dounreay had resigned over security concerns?"

John Redwood, Shadow Board of Trade President, said that he was tabling parliamentary questions to Mrs Beckett about the affair.

Shrinking Radio 1 outstripped by Radio 4

BY RAYMOND SNOODY, MEDIA EDITOR

RADIO 1 has suffered such a drastic loss of listeners it has now fallen behind even Radio 4 in share of total audience, according to figures published yesterday. Since 1994, Radio 1's total number of regular listeners has slumped from 18 million to 9.7 million.

The loss has been caused by refocusing the network and extra competition from new commercial stations. The fact that fewer people are now listening for less time must worry BBC executives. Compared with the same quarter last year, Radio 1 has lost 13 million listening hours a week, and its share of total radio listening has dropped from 11 per cent to 9.4 per cent. By contrast, Radio 2, which has been gently modernised by its Controller, Jim Moir, has increased its share to 13.2 per cent and Radio 4 has a 10.4 per cent share of listening.

Radio 1 has also suffered a drop in its main target area — the 15 to 24-year-olds. The BBC's share of those listeners has fallen from 42 per cent a year ago to 38 per cent.

Overall the official figures released by the Radio Joint Audience Research organisation show a slight increase in listeners and listening hours.

Commercial radio stayed just ahead of the BBC overall. Classic FM reached five million a week for the first time, compared with 2.6 million for Radio 3.

Tories' forestry sell-off policy denied public access to woods

BY MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

SALES of land by the Forestry Commission under the previous Government's privatisation policy led to loss of public access to woods, the National Audit Office says in a report presented to Parliament today.

The watchdog body, which monitors government spending, recommends that leasing of land, rather than freehold sale, would be a better way of preserving the rights of walkers.

In July 1989, the Conservative Government set the commission the target of selling 100,000 hectares (250,000 acres) of forest estate by the end of the century, with the aim of realising up to £150 million.

By March of last year, the report finds, the commission had made "significant

progress" towards this goal, selling 66,000 hectares for a total of £75 million.

Sales were suspended just before the last general election. They have since resumed, but on a much smaller scale, while the Labour Government reappraises the disposal policy as part of its comprehensive spending review.

The report finds that the commission had difficulty, for legal and other reasons, in entering into "continued access agreements" with buyers which ensured that the public could go on using woodland.

Between 1991 and 1994 the commission had been able to offer such agreements in less than half of 544 forest areas considered for sale. This had led to "some loss in public access", though not all the areas excluded from such agreements had been much used by the public.

The NAO suggests that the commission, which manages 1.1 million hectares

of land throughout Britain, of which 85 per cent is planted with trees, should follow the example of the New Zealand Forestry Corporation, which issues licences as an alternative to freehold sale.

"Licences are paid for by an annual fee based on the market rate for renting the land and provide the buyer with a renewable long-term lease over the stock of growing timber," the NAO says. "Public access to property on the same terms as those offered by New Zealand's state forest company are a condition of the licence."

The Forestry Commission said it had rejected the New Zealand model because "it did not meet the objectives set by the previous Government. Small sales are continuing, but no land with existing important public access is being sold without an agreement to maintain access."

Blair to impose 40% majority for union votes

BY JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR is set to impose a 40 per cent majority in workplace ballots to secure trade union recognition after failing to broker a deal between the TUC and the CBI.

Government sources said last night that the White Paper *Fairness at Work* may now be delayed until June after the failure to break the deadlock over workers' rights. But they admitted that neither the TUC nor the CBI is likely to budge from their current positions, which will force Mr Blair to impose a figure.

Mr Blair is strongly in favour of union recognition but he is determined to come up with a deal that the employers will accept.

He believes the CBI has already significantly shifted its position. But if he imposes a settlement he risks a rebellion by Labour MPs and a backlash from union leaders.

The trade unions are due to

but the TUC has made clear that it intends to stick to its proposal that 30 per cent of the workforce have to vote in favour to secure trade union recognition. The CBI originally said that figure should be 50 per cent.

Ministerial sources now say that Mr Blair chose 40 per cent as a compromise. "The employers chose 50 per cent, the unions said 30 per cent so Downing Street split the difference," one source said.

The CBI is said to have privately shifted its position to 40 per cent, but the source said Mr Blair was unlikely to split the difference again.

The Prime Minister has been anxious to secure an agreement and is wary of opting for a position that could increase industrial conflict, the source said.

The two sides are also divided over two other issues: whether small firms should be exempt and whether there

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Church says sorry as priest is jailed for sex crimes

Judge condemns 'disgrace to the cloth' who preyed on vulnerable boys at Roman Catholic orphanage

THE Roman Catholic Church apologised last night to the victims of a priest jailed for seven years for abusing young boys at an orphanage. Father Eric Taylor was convicted at Warwick Crown Court on 16 charges of indecent assault and two charges of buggery on boys at the Father Hudson's home in Coleshill, Warwickshire, committed between 1957 and 1965.



Eric Taylor found guilty on 18 charges

The court was told that Taylor, now 78, of Aston-by-Stone, Staffordshire, abused boys as young as six and then stood by as they were beaten by nuns for complaining about their alleged ordeals. According to police, at least 20 orphans who were at the home during Taylor's reign were so guilt-ridden that they committed suicide. Another, who was to have appeared as a Crown witness at Taylor's trial, tried to kill himself three days into the prosecution's evidence.

After the case a joint statement issued by the Father Hudson Society and The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham read: "We wish to express our profound sadness and sorrow for the actions of Father Taylor for which he has been convicted. "We deeply regret the effect of Father Taylor's actions and will offer counselling and on-going support as appropriate to those concerned."

The statement said the society today operated under rigorous guidelines, laid down by the Children's Act 1989. "These

dreadful incidents happened more than 30 years ago. Today Father Hudson's Society and the Archdiocese work to agreed guidelines on child protection," it added.

Although the Father Hudson Society has not operated residential homes since 1984, it does, through the Archdiocese, run a range of services including adoption, fostering, residential and day care for older people and those with profound disabilities.

Judge Marten Coates told the priest he was a disgrace to his cloth and his church: "For nearly seven years you were in a position of trust and authority at the home at Coleshill. These homes had been set up to rescue the most vulnerable people in our society."

"You told the jury the regime was harsh and boys were beaten in an unlawful manner. Not only did you do nothing about this, but you

knew the fear of receiving such punishment meant that the boys were unlikely to complain. Those few who did knew their complaints would not be believed and secure in that knowledge you indulged yourself.

"The lifelong damage you inflicted has been seen during the course of this trial. The trust placed in you, you abused on a daily basis. If you had been a younger man and these offences had been committed in more recent times, I would have imposed a sentence of more than 14 years.

"Your victims were not only young but they were helpless. You were the nearest thing they had to a father figure."

Taylor, who denied all the charges, was found not guilty of a further two charges of buggery and one charge of indecent assault. He was jailed for seven years on the two counts of buggery and five years, concurrently, for indecent assault.

After the jury returned their verdicts the court was told how Taylor had previous convictions for indecent assault. David Jones, for the prosecution, said Taylor had abused four boys at his vicarage in Worcestershire in 1975. As the jury returned their verdicts, Taylor bowed his head and closed his eyes.

After the case, one of his victims said: "Let no paedophile believe he can escape the law, no matter how helpless or vulnerable his victims may be."



Saturday Night Fever is building as London gears up for the world premiere of the disco musical next Tuesday, with £4 million already taken at the box office. The show at the Palladium stars the Australians Anita Louise Combe and Adam Garcia, above

Sex-case RAF officer found dead in his car

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

A SENIOR RAF officer who ran a combat survival and rescue school for air force pilots and navigators was found dead in a burnt-out car. He had been suspended after the announcement of an investigation by military and civilian police into alleged sexual offences.

The body of Squadron Leader Adrian Streeter, officer commanding the RAF School of Combat Survival and Rescue at St Mawgan in Cornwall, was discovered at the weekend. He is believed to have taken his own life.

The school teaches air crew how to survive in all environments and weather conditions if forced to eject from their aircraft. They are also taught how to face interrogation if captured by the enemy in wartime.

Squadron Leader Streeter, 42 and married with an 11-year-old son, was suspended from his job last Friday when he was informed that an investigation had begun by the RAF police into certain allegations. The Devon and Cornwall police were also called in to make their own inquiries.

The Ministry of Defence and the Devon and Cornwall police refused to give any details about the investigation.

A spokesman for the Devon and Cornwall police said: "We're under strict instructions not to say what we're investigating."

However, when asked directly whether the case involved allegations of a sexual offence, an MoD

spokesman said: "We can't deny it."

The MoD confirmed that Squadron Leader Streeter had been sent on leave while a police investigation was carried out.

A police spokesman said the fire was not being treated as suspicious and a file was being drawn up for the coroner. The RAF police will also send a file to the coroner after it has completed its own investigation. An inquest has been opened and adjourned pending the joint military and civilian police investigation.

Squadron Leader Streeter who took over command of the survival school in 1993, was reported missing on Sunday morning when his wife, Barbara, became anxious about his whereabouts. Two hours later, a farmer 12 miles away discovered the smouldering shell of a Volvo 340 car on a remote farm track near the village of Ladock, four miles north of Truro in Cornwall.

The charred remains in the driver's seat were later identified by dental records as those of Squadron Leader Streeter. It is believed he doused the car in petrol before setting it ablaze.

An RAF spokesman said: "We regret to confirm that the body discovered in a burnt-out car has been identified as that of Squadron Leader Adrian Streeter."

Squadron Leader Streeter joined the RAF in 1975 and was appointed officer commanding the School of Combat Survival and Rescue after a period as a qualified flying instructor.

Goliath cleared of assaulting Piranha at club

By HELEN JOHNSTONE

AN RAF officer, nicknamed Piranha, was yesterday accused of trying to wreck the 21-year career of a respected navy intelligence officer after a court martial rejected her claim that she had been assaulted at a drunken mess dinner in the Falkland Islands.

Lieutenant Clive Clifford, 37, was cleared of punching Flight Lieutenant Emma Lloyd during a singles-only dinner after less than an hour's deliberation. He said after the hearing that he had no animosity towards his accuser. The statement, issued by his solicitor, David Lancaster, added: "He is a magnanimous man, but she could have wrecked his career. He is extraordinarily relieved."

Mr Lancaster said he hoped the case would not re-open the debate of women in the armed forces adding: "You have to bear in mind the Navy are caught between two stools. They can either deal with the matter internally or wash their dirty linen in public and bring the matter to court."

Flight Lieutenant Lloyd had claimed at the court martial at HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, that Lieutenant Clifford punched her when she slapped him around the face after rejecting his advances at the dinner where all guests took on nicknames that reflected their character and appearance. Flight Lieutenant Lloyd was named after the man-eating fish, and Lieutenant Clifford was called Goliath.

She alleged that the officer, who is married and is a martial arts expert, twice punched her bottom during the

meal for members of FISHE, the Falkland Islands Sunday Hospitality Executive, in an officers' mess at the Mount Pleasant airfield.

But Lieutenant Clifford, from Portsmouth, said she had assaulted him and he had only hit her in self-defence.

Lieutenant Clifford said after the hearing that he was never in any doubt that he would be acquitted. "I want to get on now with my naval career but am disappointed that such a private event had to be subjected to such public scrutiny."

His solicitor added: "He has no animosity towards her and hopes that she will want to go on with her career as well. The real tragedy of the whole of this case is that such a private evening has become a public event."

Lieutenant Clifford, who admitted drinking a glass of brandy and almost a bottle of wine, was found not guilty on separate charges of assault and drunkenness. He had denied both charges.



Lloyd: claimed that she had been punched

Poisoner's appeal for retrial is dismissed

By JOANNA BALE

A MOTHER who poisoned a man with arsenic after he sexually and physically abused her had her appeal against her murder conviction dismissed by the Court of Appeal yesterday. Zoorah Shah, 46, was jailed for life five years ago for the murder of Mohammed Azam, to whom she turned for help when her husband left her.

The prosecution claimed she killed Azam so that she could take over a house he had helped her to buy. At her appeal, she admitted twice poisoning Azam, a convicted drug dealer, and claimed that she had not initially told the truth because of shame at the abuse she says she suffered at his hands. Her QC, Edward Fitzgerald, argued that the conviction was unsafe and called for a retrial.

Robert Smith, QC, for the Crown, said that Shah had chosen to mount an "extremely dishonest" defence at her trial. The court should not receive new evidence of depressive illness which, it was now said, established her diminished responsibility.

Lord Justice Kennedy, Mr Justice Butterfield and Mr Justice Richards dismissed her appeal, application for leave to appeal against the life sentence and leave to appeal to the House of Lords.

Giving judgment, Lord Justice Kennedy said that they found Shah "a most unsatisfactory witness, and her evidence to be not capable of belief". She had claimed that she was subjected to abuse by Azam and others for years, yet no one seemed to have noticed and she did not tell anyone about it.

Brewery called time on staff who sampled secret pints

By PAUL WILKINSON

THE Samuel Smith brewery in Yorkshire is proud of its reputation as the oldest beer producer in the county and still uses traditional methods to make its distinctive Old Brewery and Museum ales.

But its managing director, Oliver Smith, a fifth-generation descendant of the man who founded the business in Tadcaster 240 years ago, objected to his staff's time-honoured, if unofficial, tradition of taking a nip as they worked. He set up a surveillance operation and caught 13

beer taken from the production line, an industrial tribunal in Leeds was told. All were sacked for drinking on duty and gross misconduct.

Yesterday lawyers for 12 of the men told the tribunal that even their foreman, who had warned them they would be in trouble if caught, downed a bottle or two during a shift and once got so drunk he had to be taken home.

Two secret cameras were installed at the brewery after six crates of beer disappeared from the bottling plant last May. In September, after an unusually high number of

mess room, a third camera was installed there. It recorded workers taking beer with their meals.

The 13 were brought before an internal disciplinary hearing and dismissed. They said it was an excuse to cut the workforce but Mr Smith said he needed to keep his brewery "dry".

Jeremy McCullen, QC, for Samuel Smith, said every employee was aware that drinking on duty was a sackable offence, even though it might have been common.

The men are claiming unfair dismissal. The tribunal

Microsoft Office 97 advertisement for Jane Levy, a palmist. Text: PALMIST JANE LEVY USES HER RIGHT HAND TO PREDICT HER BUSINESS FUTURE. Includes an image of a hand holding a pen over a document.

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Triple vaccine 'is safe'

Study clears mumps, measles and rubella jab of causing autism and bowel disease, writes Ian Murray

A SURVEY of three million children given the triple measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccination has found that none of them developed autism as a result. The findings, published today in *The Lancet*, show that only 31 children developed bowel illnesses after being vaccinated, and all of them recovered.

The authors, from the Helsinki University Central Hospital, sent the findings in answer to a study, by a team from the Royal Free Hospital in London published in the same magazine two months ago, calling for more research into any possible link between the vaccine and autism.

The study was carried out by going through the records at the National Public Health Institute of all those given the MMR vaccine in Finland between 1982 and 1996. They reveal that almost all the children who developed symptoms such as diarrhoea and vomiting within 15 days of being vaccinated recovered within a week. A year-old boy had diarrhoea for six weeks but was healthy when checked six years later.

Apart from intestinal problems, the authors say that many children developed symptoms such as fevers and rashes. Two developed meningitis, but no child developed disorders of an autistic nature.

"Over a decade's effort to detect all severe adverse events associated with MMR vaccine could find no data supporting the hypothesis that it would cause pervasive developmental disorder [autism] or inflammatory bowel disease," the report says.

The magazine contains 11 other letters from doctors commenting on the Royal Free study, which led to many parents refusing to have their children immunised. They show that the medical profession is deeply divided over whether there is any danger in the MMR vaccine. "The an-

ger of public health workers at this paper is not due to the challenge to public health dogma," writes David Walker, of the Department of Public Health Medicine at County Durham Health Authority.

He adds: "It is because children are being put at risk from potentially lethal infectious diseases, not by new reliable evidence, but by media coverage of a badly-designed study."

However, Michael Tetterton, Centre in Surrey, says that the research by the Royal Free Hospital team "confirms the clinical observations of several paediatricians, including myself, who have noted an association between the onset of the autistic spectrum and the development of disturbed bowel habit".

Clot-buster can prolong life after heart attack

BY IAN MURRAY
 MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

EMERGENCY drug treatment and a daily aspirin dose can give heart attack victims at least another ten years of life, according to research published today.

The study, which involved 17,000 heart attack victims in 16 countries, found that those given a "clot-buster" drug and then half an aspirin for a month had long-term benefits. For every 1,000 patients who were given both drugs following their heart attack, there were about 40 extra survivors after ten years.

The research, published in the *British Medical Journal*, shows that these long-term benefits are at least as good among patients over 70 as among younger people.

Colin Baigent, a Medical Research Council scientist who was part of the Oxford University team behind the study, said: "Unless these drugs are unsuitable for a particular patient, aspirin and clot-buster should generally be given as soon as possible."

Rory Collins, British Heart Foundation Professor of Medicine at Oxford, said: "Heart attack sufferers are much more likely to survive if they receive aspirin soon after the onset of symptoms and continue for some years."

Hungry body ate fasting Buddhist alive

BY SIMON DE BRUKELLES

AN ARMY nurse turned Buddhist priest, who survived a 100-day fast last year, underwent emergency surgery yesterday to repair his battered digestive system.

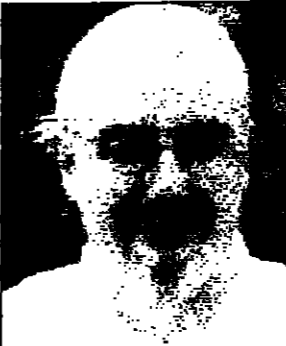
Paul Adler-Collins, 41, was the first person in 35 years to complete the fast, which was conducted at a temple on a Japanese mountain. He lost eight stone, had hallucinations and came close to death.

His wife, Helma, said that he had suffered increasing pain since returning to their home near Bath in January.

"The doctors ordered a scan and found that he had a gallstone and liver stones as a result of the fast. He thought he could cure himself but in the end the only answer was surgery," she said.

It is not the first time that his religious belief has endangered his life. He fell down a mountain during a 2,000-kilometre pilgrimage in Japan, but found a stream where tiny fish nibbled the rotting flesh from his injured feet and carried on with the trek.

The damage to his liver was caused by his body digesting its own fat and muscle to survive. The fat crystallised into stones and surgeons at the Bath Royal United Hospital had to remove his gall-



Adler-Collins: weight dropped eight stone

Patients with back pain give up on GPs

BY IAN MURRAY
 MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

BACK pain is a more permanent problem than doctors believe, according to research published today. Three out of four people who see their GPs about it still have problems a year later.

Textbooks suggest that 90 per cent of people with lower back pain get better within a month, but the study in the *British Medical Journal* found that patients did not get better, but gave up going to see their doctor.

The research was led by Gary Macfarlane from the University of Manchester and was conducted at two GP practices in the city. In all, 203 men and 287 women aged 18 to 75, who saw their doctor because of lower back pain, took part. Of the 463 who suffered a further attack, 59 per cent saw a doctor only once and 32 per cent did not have a repeat consultation after three months.

Only 2 per cent of those interviewed three months after their first back pain episode recovered completely, and after a year only a quarter were without symptoms.

"These figures simply do not fit with claims that 90 per cent of episodes of low back pain end in complete recovery," the report says.

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Watch to exam the Qu spend

Blair is... decrees...

Dolphin, for a new lease of life in the bathroom

هكذا من الأصل

Watchdog to examine the Queen's spending

By Nicholas Watt and Valerie Elliott

THE Queen's finances were opened to public scrutiny yesterday. The Government agreed to give Parliament's spending watchdog access to the £40 million Royal Household accounts.

The National Audit Office will be free to examine the £19.6 million that is spent on the occupied palaces and the £19.5 million that goes on official air and rail travel.

The £8.9 million Civil List, which finances the working expenses of the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, will not be covered by the ruling. But the Commons Public Accounts Committee, which last year pressed for the royal finances to be opened, is to increase pressure for the Civil List to be scrutinised by the audit office.

David Davis, the Tory chairman of the all-party Public Accounts Committee, yesterday welcomed the Government's decision. Mr Davis, the MP for Haltemprice and Howden, said: "This is a victory for open government. As a committed monarchist, I think this will be good for the Royal Family. This will help to maintain our traditional monarchy with dignity, because it will show how taxpayers' money is being spent."

Buckingham Palace welcomed the decision. A spokesman said: "We are happy for the [audit office], as well as external auditors and the relevant government department, to have direct access to our accounting records." Under

the previous system, Sir John Bourne, the Comptroller and Auditor General, had to request documents on occupied palaces and travel, which were examined by the Culture Department before they were passed on. Under the new system, Sir John will directly instruct the external auditors who examine royal accounts. If he is not satisfied, he will be able to demand access to the accounts himself.

Spending on maintenance and utilities at Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, St James's Palace, Clarence House, Marlborough House, Mews, and parts of Kensington Palace and Hampton Court amounted to £19.6 million last year.

The Public Accounts Committee pressed for the finances to be opened up because it was concerned by the rising costs of maintaining the palaces. MPs were dismayed by the £940,000 cost of refurbishing the Kensington Palace apartment once occupied by Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, which fell into disrepair after her death.

Buckingham Palace made clear that it was relaxed about the new scrutiny because the Queen is anxious to show greater transparency in the use of taxpayers' money and to cut costs. Spending on the palaces has been cut by nearly £1 million in the past year and the Royal Household aims to cut the bill by a further £4 million by 2000. The Queen paid £103 million tax last year.



Queen Mary's day dress from 1935, her Silver Jubilee outfit from 1937 and her choice for a meeting with the King of Belgium the same year

Exhibition reveals a royal sense of style

By Alan Hamilton

A SELECTION of evening dresses from the Queen's wardrobe goes on public display at Kensington Palace from today.

Accompanied by a selection of contemporary hats, handbags and shoes, the dresses span most of the Queen's 46-year reign and provide a highlight to the royal ceremonial dress collection, which reopens in the palace's state apartments after two years of updating and refurbishment.

The Queen has lent a sketches prepared by her couturiers Sir Norman Hartnell, Sir Hardy Amies and Ian Thomas. A sketch of a swirling 1970s evening dress by Thomas has a note in the Queen's handwriting at the bottom: "Yes, but not sure about the floating panels."

Brooding over the exhibition is the figure of Queen Mary, shown with King George V in their full 1911 Coronation robes.

Blair is beautiful, decrees magazine

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

PRINCE WILLIAM and Tony Blair are among the 50 most beautiful people in the world, in the opinion of an American magazine.

The Prince's inclusion on the list by *People*, which surveys good looks each year, was not surprising; his late mother often graced the cover. As for the Prime Minister, he was "fortunate enough to be in the right face at the right time", the magazine explained, rather uncharitably. Admired for his "slate-blue eyes and bright smile", he was

the only politician on the list. Diane von Furstenberg, a New York designer who recently attended a White House dinner given in the Prime Minister's honour, declared that "we should have him cloned". President Clinton was absent from a list dominated by American film stars such as Matt Damon. Several choices were designed to illustrate a catholic definition of beauty. These included Gloria Stuart, the 87-year-old actress, and Bernard Parks, the Los Angeles police chief.

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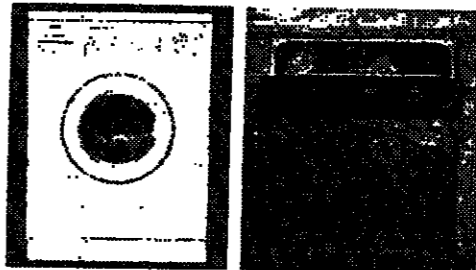
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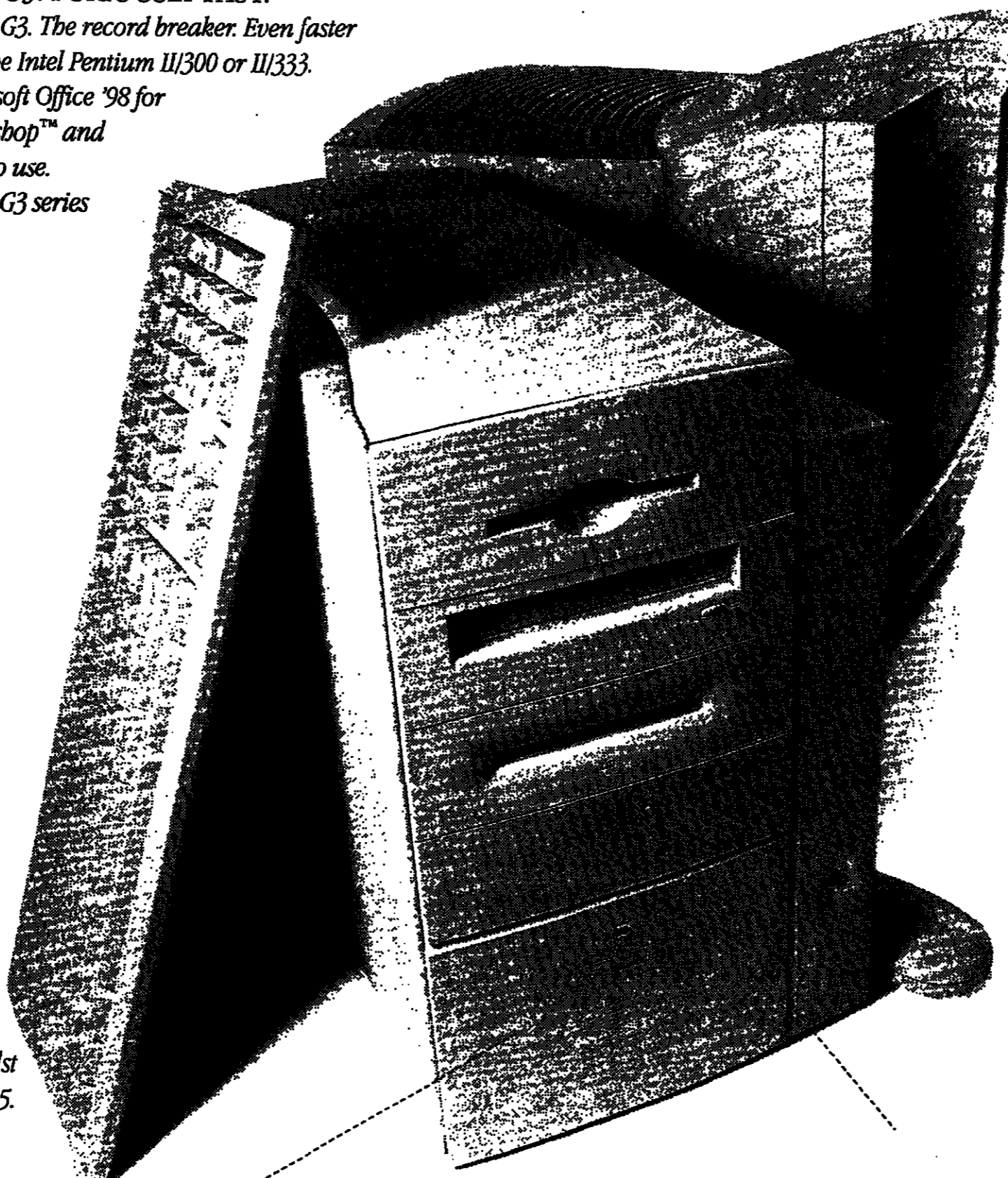
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مركزنا من الأصل

Schools face spot checks to stop test cheats

SQUADS of officials will make spot checks on 2,000 schools this term to stop teachers cheating in national curriculum tests.

Heads who suspect that a neighbouring school has sneaked a look at test papers early to tip off pupils will be able to request an investigation by one of the squads from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

Every head will be asked to sign a guarantee that none of the test papers was opened more than an hour before children saw them.

David Charter on moves to stop the leaking of exam questions to pupils to secure higher place in league tables

and that no answers were changed after the test.

The clampdown comes after an unprecedented number of claims of cheating last year which led to an investigation into 35 schools by the authority. One head in Essex was suspended and then resigned amid allegations that his pupils had been coached. In a further five cases, schools were found to have cheated and their results were adjusted or annulled.

The authority had "serious concerns" about the behaviour of 13 other schools, but the evidence was not strong enough for it to take action against them.

The problem was confined to tests for 11-year-olds at primary schools, for which league tables of performance were introduced last year. But the random spot checks, which began on Monday, will include secondary schools. About one in ten schools will receive an unannounced visit.

Nick Tate, chief executive of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, said every case of cheating undermined the credibility of the tests. "It was important to take this decisive action," he said. "There were very few cases of abuse last year but, in so far as there were some cases, they were undermining the credibility of the tests."

David Hawker, head of testing at the authority, added: "The stakes are higher now and we need to respond to that."

Most schools will have received the papers for English, mathematics and science tests to be sat over the next three weeks. Last year it was alleged that some teachers opened the papers early and gave children last-minute coaching on the questions. Some schools were

to have put up summer term wall displays including work similar to test questions. In other cases, it was alleged that teachers who thought children had not "done themselves justice" in the tests had given them another go. Dr Tate said most of the complaints came from schools that suspected neighbours of trying to gain an unfair advantage in league tables.

The spot checks will be carried out by local authority officers or the case of grant-maintained schools, officials from an examination board. They could take place any stage between delivery of papers and completion of the test.

A spokesman for the authority said that no cases of cheating had been discovered at the first 1,000 schools to receive a spot check. "Schools have welcomed this as a re-asking why we have not done before," he said.

Education page

Lessons for teachers who missed out on grammar

David Charter and John O'Leary on a new handbook for a lost generation

A HANDBOOK on how to teach grammar is being sent to every secondary school after English teachers admitted that they did not know how to prepare pupils for national tests.

The Grammar Papers contains the first directions on teaching sentence construction, punctuation and spelling for a generation of teachers who missed out on grammar at school and at teacher training college.

A survey of ten local authorities included in the guide by the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency showed that the teaching of grammar was "patchy" and often not covered explicitly. About a third of primary schools taught phrase, clause and sentence structure, while a quarter of secondary schools ignored such work in their plans, in spite of its inclusion in the national curriculum.

Teachers were "uncertain of the meaning of the word 'grammar'" and did not know what terminology to use in what circumstances or what expectations of their pupils were realistic. Its publication came as the QCA yesterday gave details of this summer's tests for three million schoolchildren. They include a second trial in 30 schools of a new grammar-based English comprehension test for 14-year-olds, intended to be the blueprint for the national test paper next summer. The decision by ministers last August to scrap that summer's "pure" gram-

mar test was widely seen as a victory for teachers who wanted grammar tested on pupils' creative writing and comprehension exercises.

David Hawker, head of testing at the QCA, yesterday said that *The Grammar Papers* would help teachers to prepare children for next year's test. The 60-page handbook concludes: "Discrete teaching of parts of speech and parsing in de-contextualised exercise form is not a particularly effective activity, and only older and more able pupils are likely to understand and retain the knowledge."

Mr Hawker added: "Being in mind the teaching of grammar has been somewhat neglected over the years, we feel more explicit testing at 14 will raise the profile of that aspect of English."

Mr Hawker said the pilot English test paper would ask pupils to translate a stream of spoken language into properly punctuated and well-constructed sentences. A further question would ask pupils to read a piece of prose and comment on the ways sentence structure adds to the meaning of the passage.

Students would be given marks for referring to grammatical forms in their answers. Mr Hawker added: "We had sub-clauses in last year's trial tests, and we have still got them this year."

Many primary schools will this summer run national tests for children at all ages from seven to 11 after head teachers swamped the QCA with requests for the first optional tests for eight and ten-year-olds in English and mathematics. The first optional tests for nine-year-olds were offered last summer and were taken up by around 90 per cent of primary schools.

Mr Hawker said that there were no plans to make annual national tests compulsory. He added: "Many schools will be using the next couple of weeks to test their year groups so they can build up a picture of children's performance throughout the school."

This summer, after trial tests in 1997, mental arithmetic tests for 11 and 14-year-old children will be compulsory in all schools. They will hear questions read out on tape by Maggie Maah, a Yorkshire Television continuity announcer, who will leave gaps of between five and 15 seconds for them to compose their answers.

TIMETABLE FOR STATUTORY TESTS 1998		
KEY STAGE 1 (Seven-year-olds)		
English (45 minute comprehension test and 30 minute spelling test) Mathematics (40 minutes test) The tests can be taken any time during May.		
KEY STAGE 2 (11-year-olds)		
Date	Morning	Afternoon
Monday May 11	Mathematics Test A 20 minutes	Mental Arithmetic Test (non-calculator) 45 minutes
Tuesday May 12	Mathematics Test B 45 minutes	Science Test A 35 minutes
Wednesday May 13	Reading Test Spelling, Handwriting 45 minutes plus Test 15 minutes reading 10 minutes & 5 mins time	Mathematics Ext. Test C 30 minutes
Thursday May 14	Writing test English Ext. 15mins	Test 45 mins plus 90 minutes planning
Friday May 15	Science Test B 35 minutes	Test C 30 minutes
KEY STAGE 3 (14-year-olds)		
Date	Morning	Afternoon
Tuesday May 5	English Paper 1 1 hour 30 minutes	English paper 2 1 hour 15 minutes plus 15 minutes reading time Tests A & C Paper 1 hour 30 minutes
Wednesday May 6	Mental Arithmetic English Extension 20 mins Mathematics Paper 1 (non-calculator) 1 hour	Mathematics Paper 2 1 hour Mental arithmetic B 20 minutes Science Paper 2 1 hour
Thursday May 7	Science Paper 1 1 hour	Science Extension Paper 1 hour
Friday May 8	Mathematics Extension Paper 1 hour	
Monday May 11		



Barnfields Primary in Stafford has been named as one of the new beacon schools

Top 100 get £1.8m to pass on success

By DAVID CHARTER EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

AN ELITE group of 100 "beacon schools" is to be given £1.8 million to pass on their secrets of their success. Ministers also want the schools to give work-based training to a new generation of student teachers and show colleges how to improve their teacher training courses.

Stephen Byers, the Schools Standards Minister, said the schools would be asked to volunteer for "beacon" status drawn initially from the 100 schools named as "best performers" in the annual report by Chief Inspector of Schools, Sir Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools. They will receive up to £50,000 each year for training, running seminars for visiting teachers and producing guides to their successful methods.

Mr Byers said at a conference for the top 107 schools: "One is the possibility that if the school is named a beacon school there will be a national competition created between with local schools and rather than increasing parental choice, it will create it because schools will come oversubscribed."

David Morton, head of Barnfields Primary School, Stafford, one of the beacon schools, said there were drawbacks: "One is the possibility that if the school is named a beacon school there will be a national competition created between with local schools and rather than increasing parental choice, it will create it because schools will come oversubscribed."

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Ex-sailor spared jail for £250,000 hoax sea search

By Russell Jenkins

A FORMER Royal Navy engineer, who provoked an air and sea search costing £250,000 with a hoax telephone call from his home, was spared a jail term yesterday.

Sydney Grayston, 52, made an early-morning call to the Liverpool Coastguard last January, saying he was in difficulties while sailing his catamaran, *Naomi*, towards Preston in a severe gale. Over the next two hours he made two further calls on his mobile, claiming he was 20 miles off the northeast coast of Northern Ireland and was taking to his liferaft because the *Naomi* was sinking.

Five helicopters, four lifeboats, 12 coastguard rescue teams, an RAF Nimrod and merchant vessels from Britain and the Irish Republic were deployed in an operation co-ordinated by RAF Kinloss and the RNLI in Poole. As would-be rescuers risked their lives, Grayston, a chronic alcoholic at the end of an eight-day drinking binge, went to bed. When police woke him, he said he could not remember making the calls.

The former seaman, from Ingot, Preston, described as living in a fantasy world, was given 12 months' probation at



Grayston yesterday: he said he felt ashamed

Preston Magistrates' Court. Jonathan Feinstein, the magistrate, told him that he was spared a custodial sentence only because of his ill health and "very peculiar situation". Grayston, who admitted using the telecommunication system to send false messages, has pancreatic cancer and angina and has had three heart attacks. Grayston, who lives alone in a council flat, was also banned from driving for five years for drink-driving. He was found to be more than three times over the limit when stopped by police at 4am on the day before his mother's funeral in February.

The hoax call had been traced because he had contact-

ed the coastguards days earlier to ask about the weather. When police arrived at his house, he said: "I appear to have made a bit of a fool of myself, but don't worry, I'll send a long apology to the coastguard."

John Didsbury, for the defence, said Grayston spent eight years in the Royal Navy as an engineer before working for shipping companies. In 1989 he was chief engineer on a research vessel observing sperm whales in the Azores.

Mr Didsbury said his client had no recollection of making the calls after drinking for eight days and taking prescribed drugs. Including Prozac. He said: "To say he was mortified is an understatement, given his history of involvement in the maritime world. He is a man who relied on the emergency services for most of his working life."

In a statement, Mr Grayston said: "While I did not intend the actual consequences of my actions, I would like to express my regret and remorse for putting the lives of the rescue personnel at risk and for the huge financial burden placed on public funds. I will suffer shame and embarrassment for the rest of my life and I have learnt a very salutary lesson."



Lieutenant Suzanne Moore collided with a sister ship as she berthed her vessel HMS Dasher at Guernsey

Navy woman crashes while parking

By Michael Evans
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

A WOMAN naval lieutenant who made history in March when she took command of a Royal Navy warship has crashed her vessel into a sister ship.

After just ten days of being in charge of a warship for the first time, Lieutenant Suzanne Moore's 65ft long, 49-tonne fast training vessel, HMS Dasher, collided with HMS Punter, as she tried to berth alongside in windy conditions in St Peter



Port in Guernsey. HMS Punter, under the command of Lieutenant-Commander Alexander Hall, had already successfully berthed when HMS Dasher approached

at an angle. It is believed the bow of Lieutenant Moore's ship hit the side of HMS Punter, causing it minor damage.

Lieutenant Moore, 26, one of the first two women to be given command, had entered the narrow port after completing patrols off the Channel Islands during which she had given navigation training to a crew of students from the Bristol University Royal Naval Unit. The accident happened on March 29 but the details became known only yesterday. No disciplinary action was taken.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Twelve fans held after football violence

Four people were charged with public order offences after police arrested suspected football hooligans at dawn yesterday. A further eight people were expected to be charged. Kent police said the raids on addresses in Kent, southeast London and Surrey followed violence at the Second Division match between Gillingham and Fulham last month.

Cold shoulder

Iceland, the frozen foods chain, is guaranteeing from today that its own-label products will contain no genetically modified substances. The company says biotech corporations have introduced such foodstuffs by stealth.

School bus crash

Six children suffered whip-lash injuries after two youths jumped on a school bus and released the handbrake, causing the vehicle to crash into a wall. The driver had left the double-decker, which was bound for Prescot, St Helens.

Paedophile flees

A convicted paedophile escaped during an escorted visit to a swimming pool, the Department of Health said. David Marker is understood to have been in mental institutions since 1965, when he was convicted of indecent assault.

Pay protest leaves Irish police feeling sick

By Audrey Magee
IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

TODAY is open day for thieves in Ireland as thousands of police officers call in sick as part of a national protest at pay levels.

The 24-hour revolt will leave banks and businesses across Ireland without security. The Army will provide emergency cover for embassies, central banks and government offices.

Most of the 8,500 officers of Garda rank are expected to call their offices to say they are sick, complaining of flu symptoms. They are banned from striking.

The Garda Representative Association claims that the officers have been driven to act by the Government's failure to agree a 13 per cent pay rise.

When some Dublin Gardai started a sick-leave protest in 1961, sackings followed and rebellion spread. That dispute was finally solved by a former Archbishop of Dublin.

Tuberculosis alert

About 160 patients have been alerted after an orthopaedic surgeon contracted tuberculosis. The surgeon is recovering and there have been no reported cases of the disease among patients at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.

RAF men rescued

An RAF jet pilot trainee and his instructor ejected from their plane as it ditched in the Irish Sea 20 miles off Anglesey. The men, who had minor injuries, were rescued by their colleagues from RAF Valley, Anglesey.

Tube strike

Strikes by guards on London Underground's Northern Line are to go ahead today and on Tuesday after last-minute talks involving the Rail Maritime and Transport union failed to resolve a dispute over jobs.

Price buster

A bra worn on stage by Madonna during her 1993 Girlie Shows sold for £2,530 in a rock auction at Christie's, South Kensington. A white fur dress from her 1987 tour sold for £4,600 to the same private British collector.

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THE TIMES Family showi

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Douglas Hamilton

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Family stopped Degas showing home truths

Psychologist says artist succeeded too well in showing tensions in his aunt's marriage, writes Ian Murray

THE mystery of why one of the most detailed paintings by Edgar Degas was not exhibited in his lifetime may have been unravelled by a British psychologist.

The French artist (1834-1917) spent nine years working intermittently on the portrait of his aunt Laura with her husband and two children. There is no record of it being put on show after it was finished in 1867 and it was discovered in his studio only after he died.

Richard Shillitoe, a consultant clinical psychologist, has concluded that the artist so accurately portrayed the tensions in the marriage that the family did not want it shown.

The picture, now in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris, shows Laura with her children, Giovanna and Giulia, and Baron Gennaro Bellelli, a lawyer

and politician from Naples for joining the 1848 revolution. When Degas began the painting in 1858, the family were in rented accommodation in Florence and in financial difficulty. Laura's father, whose portrait is depicted behind her, had just died and she was wearing black.

Relations with her husband were at a low ebb. "Living with Gennaro, whose detestable nature you know and who has no serious occupation, shall drive me into an early grave," she wrote to Degas.

The artist has captured that mood. Laura's hand rests on the table as though trying to steady herself. Giulia perches restlessly on the edge of a chair. Giovanna holds herself stiffly and primly while her mother places a steady hand on her shoulder.

The baron is separated both



A self-portrait by Edgar Degas

psychologically and physically from the rest of his family. In a pose that contrasts sharply with the formal stance of his wife and children. The family dog, as if in disgust, is walking off to the right.

Mr Shillitoe, who works at the Alredale General Hospital at Steeton, West Yorkshire, says: "It is as though the family members are deliberately avoiding eye contact. The father gazes at his family like an outsider watching

them pose, but they do not return his gaze. Laura stares with her head held high into the far distance. Giovanna alone establishes eye contact with the viewer while Giulia looks hastily to her left, embarrassed, unable to bear being observed."

Mr Shillitoe says the picture is meant to be read from left to right, like a story. "As a family therapist might do, Degas has sculpted the family. In the arrangements of the figures we can read the patterns of inter-relations. In their expressions and their gestures we can read their psychological states. The tensions within the Bellelli family are made very public."

The artist has displayed "the undercurrents within a setting of bourgeois orderliness. Behind the apparent tranquillity [is] one of the finest 19th-century portrayals of a dysfunctional family."

Their likely reaction to having the baron's deficiencies and his family's alienation so accurately drawn was to have stopped the picture being displayed.



The Bellelli Family, by Degas, displays "the undercurrents within a setting of bourgeois orderliness"

V&A purchase keeps Canova study in Britain

By DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

FOUR years after the Getty Museum in California lost an intense battle to acquire an 18th-century masterpiece by Antonio Canova, history seems to have repeated itself.

Just as the Victoria and Albert Museum helped to prevent the Getty from exporting *The Three Grazes*, it has saved for the nation a pastel depiction of Canova in his studio by Hugh Douglas Hamilton (1734-1806), the Dublin master of landscapes and portraits of British visitors to Italy.

The purchase for the Victoria and Albert was made possible with a grant of £262,700 covering half the cost from the National Art Collections Fund, Britain's largest independent art charity.

Sir Nicholas Goodison, its chairman, said that the work was of such outstanding national significance that "it was export-stopped on all three counts — judged of such aesthetic, scholarly and national importance that it should not be allowed to leave the country."

It is the largest grant given by the National Art Collections Fund this year: they decided to double the figure when the heritage lottery fund

turned down the application. One source said that was primarily because the Victoria and Albert already another application with the fund. However, there is also a sense that "politically correct regionalism" is creeping into lottery policy, penalising major museums in London and Scotland.

Hamilton depicted Canova with Henry Tresham, the Irish painter and dealer who later became professor of painting at the Royal Academy, with a plastermodel for *Cupid and Psyche*, a sculpture which is today in the Louvre, Paris.

Sir Nicholas explained that this work is "widely considered the finest British pastel ever executed, not only showing the full potential of this medium but also the artist at the height of his creative skill."

"It is in outstanding condition, which is rare due to the fragility of pastel work, and is of a remarkable size. The scene it represents is of exceptional historical interest, recording the close relationship between the famous Italian sculptor and his British patrons in Rome in the 1780s," Sir Nicholas said.



Douglas Hamilton's painting of Canova in his studio

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Labour will try to outflank enemies of Lords reform

THE Government will reveal its plans for a reformed House of Lords this autumn to counter opposition to the legislation to expel hereditary peers.

Complaints that it is getting rid of the hereditary peers without saying what will follow them are to be met by a Green Paper outlining a range of options for a new Upper House. These are expected to include a part-elected, part-nominated chamber, with peers representing the regional parliaments, assemblies and local authorities. Non-Christian faiths could also be represented in the Lords for the first time, joining the Anglican Bishops, whose 26-strong group could be cut.

A second option will be a fully elected senate based on a US-style federal system, which MPs might resist because of the threat to their superiority. The Green Paper will accompany the Government's "stage one" Bill to strip the hereditary peers of their voting rights.

In an interview with *The Times*, Lord Richard, the Leader of the Lords, disclosed that the document would act as a basis for cross-party discussion about wider reforms of the Lords.

He made clear that no consensus had been reached with Tory peers in a series of private meetings. He accused them of simply trying to delay

James Landale on ministers' plans to reveal new shape for the Upper House

reform and insisted the Government would press head with the expulsion of the hereditary peers.

The consultation paper is designed to smooth the passage of the stage one Bill, which ministers fear will face strong opposition in the Lords. Although some peers oppose reform on principle, many are more concerned at the Government's tactical decision to do it in two stages. They fear that without a clear indication from the Government of the direction of the second stage reforms, the process will grind to a halt once the hereditary peers have gone.

They also suspect that the Government is more interested in getting rid of the Tory majority than it is in properly reforming the Lords and would be quite happy to stick with an interim chamber of appointed life peers.

The Government hopes that the document will sugar the pill of the hereditary peers' expulsion by satisfying

enough peers that second stage reforms are on the way. But it is not likely to go far enough for those peers who want reform carried out in a single "big bang".

The paper also has the simultaneous effect of calling the Tory party's bluff. Viscount Cranborne, the Tory leader in the Lords, has repeatedly refused to outline his party's views on Lords reform until the Government puts forward an options paper.

Lord Richard said: "The Government will set out possible considerations and options leading to stage two. I would expect this to be analytical rather than indicative and to be published by the time the Government introduces legislation for stage one."

Without confirming that the stage one Bill will be in the next Queen's Speech, he said: "Opposition hereditary peers would be ill-advised to assume that the legislation will be long delayed."

He challenged the Tories to set out their position on Lords reform. He said that the Government had sought consensus with Tory peers through a series of private meetings but "these have not borne fruit".

He added: "The clear aim of the opposition is to delay the removal of hereditary peers. Despite initial impressions, they have backed away from serious discussion."

Paper price debate delayed

By JILL SHERMAN

THE Government has postponed a debate on the Competition Bill for a further week because of concern that it could delay less controversial legislation.

The Bill, amended by the Lords to rule out so-called predatory pricing by newspapers, was to have its second

reading in the Commons on Tuesday but it will now be on May 11.

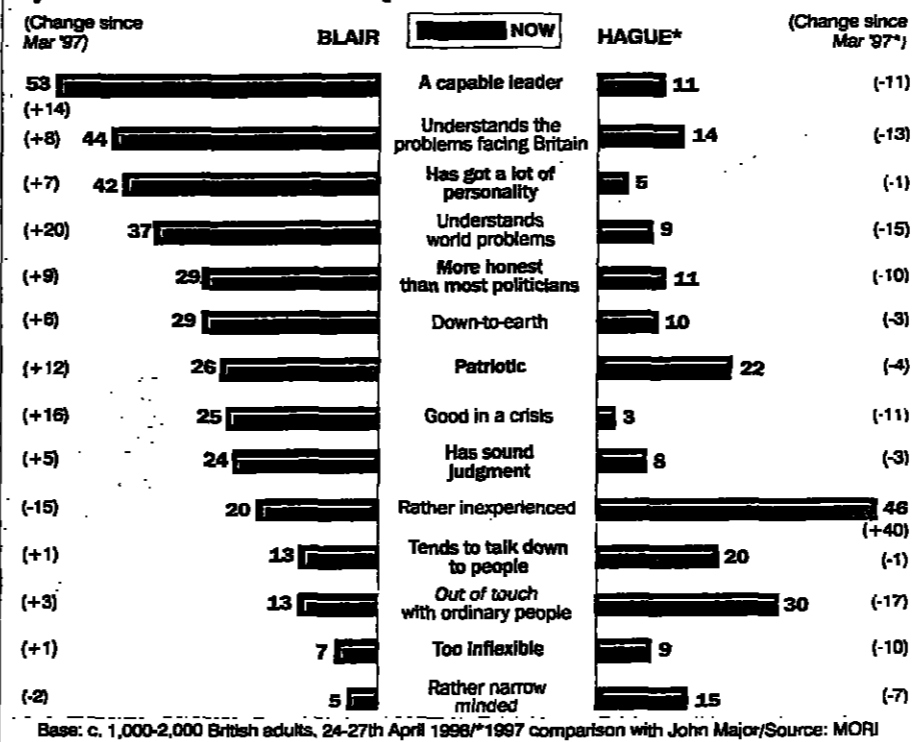
Ministerial sources denied that the legislation was being delayed because of problems over the Bill and emphasised that the Government was determined to overturn the Lords amendment. But ministers are expecting a sizeable Labour rebellion and some

MPs are threatening to put down new amendments aimed at preventing newspapers from cutting their cover price to drive other newspapers out of business.

The Labour MPs Chris Mullin and Giles Radice hope to come up with a workable amendment that they can table during the final stages of the Bill.

BLAIR AND HAGUE: HOW THEY COMPARE

Here is a list of things both favourable and unfavourable that have been said about various politicians. I would like you to pick out all those statements that you think fit... Mr Blair/Mr Hague



Hague struggling with major image problem

By PETER RIDDELL

WILLIAM HAGUE has an image problem. The latest MORI poll for *The Times*, undertaken last weekend, shows that on 14 measures of leadership he is rated less favourably than not only Tony Blair but also Paddy Ashdown.

There have been only limited signs of any improvement over the past six months. The Tory leader has made the greatest impression with the public on unfavourable measures such as inexperience, being out of touch and tending to talk down to people. Even Tory supporters have doubts about some of his leadership qualities, despite his widely acknowledged abilities as a Commons performer and his successful reorganisation of the party structure.

Mr Hague is doing badly among the better-off, the hard core of Tory supporters. His approval rating, measuring those satisfied less those dissatisfied with the way he is doing his job as Tory leader,

is minus 25 per cent among those earning more than £25,000 a year, but minus 9 per cent among those earning less than £9,500 a year. The only group with whom he enjoys a positive rating (of plus 2 per cent) is the small number of adults, about 3 per cent, who do not have a telephone.

Mr Hague's image compares with that which John Major had for much of his leadership in being seen as out of touch and tending to talk down to people. Even Tory supporters have doubts about some of his leadership qualities, despite his widely acknowledged abilities as a Commons performer and his successful reorganisation of the party structure.

The most striking comparison is with Mr Blair's ratings: 37 per cent of Tory supporters regard Mr Blair as a capable leader, but a mere 21 per cent

take the same view of Mr Hague. Similarly, roughly double the number of Tory supporters regard Mr Blair as good in crisis and understanding world problems as mention Mr Hague in these respects. Tory supporters rate their own leader ahead of Mr Blair on only half the leadership measures.

MORI has compared Mr Hague's present ratings with Mr Blair's at a roughly similar stage of his leadership in February 1995. On only one of the 14 measures, being patriotic, is Mr Hague ahead of Mr Blair now. For instance, whereas in 1995 31 per cent regarded Mr Blair as understanding the problems facing Britain, just 14 per cent take the same view of Mr Hague now. Mr Blair's achievement over the past three years has been to build and improve on these ratings. That is the challenge for Mr Hague now.

Mr Hague's image compares with that which John Major had for much of his leadership in being seen as out of touch and tending to talk down to people. Even Tory supporters have doubts about some of his leadership qualities, despite his widely acknowledged abilities as a Commons performer and his successful reorganisation of the party structure.

Blair has public support, but he must perform

WHEN the sky is clear, the wise politician always thinks of when the next cloud will appear, and from where. The latest batch of opinion polls appears to be unqualified good news for Tony Blair and Labour, while there is virtually nothing of comfort for William Hague and the Tories. But there are one or two warning signs for the Government, as Mr Blair is aware.

An intriguing pointer to the impact of the Blair administration is shown by a question asked by MORI on attitudes towards "the present system of government" (for the Crowther Hunt report in 1973 and for the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust). Twenty-five years ago, there was a roughly even split between those who thought the system worked well and those who believed it could be improved. By 1995, only just over a fifth thought it worked well and three quarters that it could be improved. Now, however, 41 per cent think it works well, and 54 per cent that it could be improved. People may be more satisfied with the system of government as a result of the introduction of far-reaching constitutional reforms by Labour. Or it may be simply that past discontent was linked to a very unpopular party being in office. Revealingly, the biggest shift has occurred among Labour supporters, while Tories are now less content with the system of government.

The public is, however, generally positive about the Government. An ICM poll for the Observer last Sunday showed that nearly three quarters of the public, including a majority of Tories, disagreed with the proposition that the Labour Government has no principles and is only interested in staying in power. The public is also more favourably disposed towards Mr Blair than some of his colleagues: according to a Harris Research poll for *The Independent*, 46 per cent of people think that Mr Blair understands the problems of ordinary people, but some of his ministers do not. Some 20 per cent think that both Mr

Blair and his ministers understand people's problems, and 27 per cent think neither do. However, the public is more sceptical/realistic about the Government's performance. For instance, two thirds think that public services have remained the same since the election, and only one eighth believe they have improved. A MORI poll for *The Sun* this week showed that the proportion thinking that the Government has kept its promises has fallen from 45 to 40 per cent since November, while the number thinking it has not risen from 41 to 46 per cent. The public has limited faith in the Government's ability to transform the NHS: the proportion believing that Labour has the best health policies fell from 47 per cent in April last year to 33 per cent in January. But there was no improvement in the Tory rating. Public opinion may also lag

behind changes in the economy. For instance, the latest CBI trends survey this week pointed to a sharp downturn in confidence. But the MORI economic optimism index, measuring the balance between those thinking that the economy will improve over the next 12 months, has generally been positive in recent months (plus one point now), when it is often heavily negative between elections. This is despite a series of increases in the mortgage rate but optimism and attitudes towards the Government could be severely affected if there is a recession, and a sharp rise in unemployment, rather than the soft landing which the Treasury is forecasting.

The overall message of the polls is that the public is prepared to give the Government a fair wind to see how it performs. But this is not an unqualified endorsement. The Government has to deliver.

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Cashing in on past is key to Brown's future

"See how money and finance are changing your life" - two Labour Budgets and the pips are not squeaking. How long can Gordon Brown keep us happy?

Gordon Brown is having to spend much of his time these days pretending that the economy is not doing as well as it is. Tony Blair is clearly the biggest factor in Labour's astonishing popularity a year after the election. But the buoyant state of the nation's finances and the return of the "feel-good" factor are playing a massive part. That these are very largely due to Kenneth Clarke in his latter years at the Treasury makes no difference. Mr Blair and Mr Brown are getting the credit for the way they are managing it. Mr Brown helped to get Labour

lected by convincing voters that they could feel safe - and, after two Budgets, they are still smiling. According to figures from the Institute of Fiscal Studies even the richest 10 per cent of the population are no more than £1.50 a week worse off after a year of Labour. The lowest-paid groups have fared better than those at the upper end. Some taxes have risen and there have been several small rises in mortgage rates. But, as a result of what was clearly the most momentous decision of his tenure, the responsibility for that can now be conveniently laid at the door of the Bank of England. Mr Brown gave power over interest rates to the election. Nowadays its monetary policy committee deliberations are watched with intense fascination as the hawks battle the doves over the



By Philip Webster, Political Editor

size of our mortgages while they decide what needs to be done to meet the inflation target that Mr Brown has set them. The high pound is causing severe problems for exporters; however, the millions travelling abroad on their holidays are hardly complaining. The Chancellor's nightmare must be that, so far out from the shore of the next election, this may be about as good as it gets. So his favourite word - whether he is talking to MPs, Cabinet colleagues, the public sector unions or private companies - is "tough". When last week's public sector borrowing figures showed that Britain was almost back in the black, there was a total absence of triumphalism from the Treasury. Mr Brown was soon castigating

the private sector for paying its employees too much, and failing to match the responsibility shown by the nurses and other public service groups. Because of the pledge that was central to Labour's appeal to the country at the election, Mr Brown will never in this Parliament be able to put up the basic or top rate of income tax. He has, of course, found other ways of raising cash in his two Budgets, such as the windfall tax on the utilities that brought in about £3.5 billion. Overall, the public verdict on the Labour Government's handling of the economy is that it has been pretty painless so far. There have been bonuses - a 20 per cent rise in child benefit for the first child and a guaranteed minimum income for lowly paid families with at least one member in work. Looking over Mr

Brown's shoulder all the time is a Prime Minister who will not allow him to upset the middle-class voters who came across to Labour for the first time last May - and whom he wants to keep on board. So when Mr Brown suggested a £50,000 limit on the tax-free savings from Tassas and Peps that could be transferred to new Individual Savings Accounts, Downing Street intervened to insist that savings already built up above that level should not be taxed retrospectively. Mr Brown climbed down. Given the constraints on the scope of his tax-raising powers, the Chancellor has no alternative but to keep the lid on spending. But the year-long Whitehall comprehensive review, intended to come up with savings, has ended up with nearly all the

spending ministers asking for more money. Mr Brown knows that he will have to go on finding more for health and education through the Parliament. So far he has done so by neat accounting tricks - such as raiding the contingency spending reserves allocated in the previous Government's figures. Now the crunch is coming. Mr Brown will be ever-fearful that the hoped-for soft landing for the economy does not turn into a recession. The Government is certain to be in surplus in the current financial year. The two-year freeze on the spending figures inherited from the Tories ends next year. Cabinet ministers are restless. Mr Brown still preaches "rigorous" discipline across the board. If he is to keep the electorate sweet for the next election, he has to succeed.

Expense mars good start to jobs scheme



Jill Sherman and Alexandra Freaon on the New Deal

"Match your skills to the new world of work" Will Labour's plans to get unemployed youngsters into work succeed?

Labour's first task in the world of work was to make the leap across the Commons chamber and learn the job of governing. Its second was to get as many other people into work as possible and to give them new skills. Gordon Brown has been undertaking the onerous task of getting 118,000 unemployed youngsters into jobs under his Welfare to Work schemes. The Chancellor shed his usual reluctance to spend money and shared out his £3.5 billion windfall levy on Britain's unskilled workforce. With falling unemployment, the Chancellor's first problem was finding enough youngsters to take part in his New Deal. The answer was to extend the project to the over-25s, single mothers, the long-term sick and disabled and, now, those over 50. The New Deal for young people offered four options: a six-month subsidised job with an employer, a six-month place on the Government's

environment task force, six months in the voluntary sector, or up to a year in full-time education. Companies involved in the scheme can claim £60 a week for each youngster and a £750 training subsidy. Initial results look encouraging. Of the 38,000 young people who have been interviewed at job centres, 789 have been placed in unsubsidised jobs, 911 in subsidised jobs and 711 have started on other options. A major worry is that more than the expected numbers are securing subsidised jobs and too few are taking unsubsidised work, making the scheme far more expensive than had been envisaged. Another potential fear, voiced by the Institute of Directors, among others, is that many of the initial target group of young people may turn out to be virtually unemployable because they have a criminal record or a problem with drugs. Under the New Deal, a young person capable of work who refuses a job will have their benefit cut. The element of compulsion has not been extended to other categories,

such as single parents and the disabled - yet. The scheme has found work for 1,530 of the 24,800 single parents contacted in eight pilot areas. But the decision to cut single-parent benefit by about £11 a week for new claimants is deterring some from seeking work because they fear that they will be unable to return to the same levels of benefit should they take a job and lose it. Although the new childcare tax credit, offering people on low incomes childcare subsidies worth up to £100 a week, will help many single parents to find work, they will not be able to take a job until the Government's much heralded National Childcare Strategy has delivered more places where they can leave their children for the day. Campaigners for the long-term sick and disabled have welcomed the £195 million that has been set aside to help the estimated one million unemployed people with disabilities who would prefer to work. They are also pleased with the new 12-month "linking" rule applied to incapacity benefit, which

means that anyone who loses a job within a year of taking it will return to the previous rate of benefit. Many feel, however, that the best way to get disabled people into work would be more aggressively to promote their rights and to tackle employer discrimination.



Job mobility: the Welfare to Work scheme aims to provide new jobs and new skills, but costs may prove greater than had been envisaged

Promises to do better await the ultimate test

"Open your mind to life-long learning" - education was one of the Government's main goals, but has the lot of the pupil or teacher improved?

Education, education, education, Tony Blair said, would be the passions of the Labour Government. Three Bills and millions of pounds later, the promise would seem to have been kept. Yet many teachers at the Easter conferences - not just leftwingers - saw no improvement over the Tories. With students and their parents also disgruntled at the prospect of paying for higher education, and colleges and universities still waiting for their share of the booty, it is tempting to question what all the activity is for. The answer lies in ministers' almost obsessive pursuit of manifesto commitments and the targets they have set for raising standards in state schools. Anything that gets in the way of this quest, be it the way of this quest, be it temporarily dispensable subjects, has been given short shrift by David Blunkett and his team at the Department for Education and Employment. The classic example has been the commitment to raise standards of literacy and numeracy in primary schools. With highly ambitious targets set for 2002, Mr Blunkett did not hesitate to trespass on the hitherto sacred ground of teaching methods and the broad curriculum. Schools have been told to devote an hour a day to literacy; compulsory lessons in history, music and other parts of the curriculum have been suspended. Projects such as the creation of a General Teaching Council are designed to show



By John O'Leary, Education Editor

recognised, even if their pay remains below hoped-for levels. Initially, Mr Blunkett's priority was to show that Labour meant what it said about raising standards and being tough on failure. Conservative programmes such as the Assisted Places Scheme were ditched, but others have been applied more ruthlessly than before. The early decision to "name and shame" 18 schools that had made slow progress after damning inspection reports was the prime example. The perseverance with league tables and Ofsted also rankles with teachers. The approach has been popular with parents, however. The first moves towards reducing infant school classes

to a maximum of 30 pupils, the extension of nursery provision and publication of national guidelines on homework have all struck a chord with a public conditioned to think that state education was in terminal decline.

As in other areas of Labour's first year, a skilful presentation can exaggerate the achievement. An educational place for every four-year-old, for example, came commendably early, but most are in primary school reception classes, rather than nurseries. Another manifesto commitment to tick off, but at the expense of often more suitable pre-school places. There can be no doubting

the scale of the Government's enterprise, however. Labour publicity for next week's local elections claims 30 promises have already been delivered, while the education action zones to be launched next month hold out the possibility of dramatic changes to the state system. The initiative will involve business in the running of schools and may herald a more flexible use of time. Education has not suffered the full effects of Labour's self-denying ordinance on public spending. The Chancellor found an extra £1 billion to supplement the Tories' uneasily tight plans, as well as starting a five-year investment programme to put £2 billion into school buildings. The test of Mr Blair's promise to devote a rising share of national wealth to education will come in this summer's Treasury review. Further and higher education, in particular, will be waiting to see what they can expect from Labour after a year in which schools have held centre stage. Mr Blunkett has acknowledged that successive cuts have imperilled many further education colleges. He would like to give universities an early return on the £1,000 tuition fees to be introduced this autumn, but is constrained by the Government's accounting conventions. A year into his tenure of office, Mr Blunkett's stock in government and in the education world remains high. For all the missivings about individual policies, he retains the trust of most teachers and parents. But, as with the lifelong learning plans featured in the Dome, several more years will be needed to tell whether the early promise

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Killings continue as Kosovo hardliners shun path of pacifist resistance

FROM TOM WALKER
IN BELGRADE

POLICE in Kosovo were told yesterday to collect two Serb bodies from territory controlled by Albanian guerrillas. The tip-off confirmed the fears of moderates on both sides of the province's ethnic divide: that Kosovo is on the brink of a bloody social implosion similar to the darkest days of the Bosnian war.

The Serb security forces were unable to go anywhere near the village of Dasinovac, where the two elderly Serbs they suspect the caller referred to had lived. It lies within a triangle of territory southeast of Pec, known to contain ruthless forces of the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK), and where six other Serbs are thought to be missing. Twenty miles away, on the Prizren-Dakovica road, a policeman was killed about midnight on Wednesday by an anti-tank rocket. The attack showed that the UCK has enough weapons at least to make the Serbs think twice before sending tanks and armoured personnel carriers towards the rebel army's village strongholds.

An Orthodox priest in the Decane area said he suspected that the bodies were those of Slobodan Radosevic and Milos Radunovic, the fate of whose wife, Milica Radunovic, is not known. "I have tried not to believe in these attacks because I ask myself what good they do the Albanians," he said, questioning the UCK tactics. "Several 'policemen' they have killed were no longer in active service and many of the Albanians they kill as collaborators have not been working for Serb firms. I do not get their logic any more." Diplomats fear

that the UCK is beyond the control of the mainly pacifist Democratic League for Kosovo (LDK) and that radicals within the party will push for the overthrow of Ibrahim Rugova, the LDK leader who has preached non-cooperation rather than violence for more than ten years. Sources close to the party said yesterday that they felt the proposed sanctions to be imposed on the Serbs by the Contact Group

are almost meaningless and worried that the UCK's shadowy leadership will take matters into its own hands. "The dynamic of violence is a step ahead of what the international community has decided," said Veton Surroi, editor of Kosovo's largest Albanian-language daily newspaper, *Koha Ditore*, and a member of the ethnic Albanian team picked by the LDK to negoti-

ate with Serbia. "There is a need for much greater force and pace from the international community." In Belgrade, officials were said to be pleasantly surprised by the Contact Group's lack of venom and there was little rabid anti-foreign reaction yesterday, a sure sign that President Milosevic of Yugoslavia is relatively content.

There is a solution, page 24

Visions of gloom and glory herald dawn of the euro

TOMORROW'S send-off for the European single currency will be painted by EU leaders in Brussels as the dawn of a new age, but their rhetoric will not mask anxiety over one of the biggest gambles attempted by a group of sovereign states.

The euro is seen by Helmut Kohl and much of the Continent's political establishment as an historic leap towards political union. However, the territory is so uncharted that the experts and many of its supporters are at odds over the benefits and dangers that lie beyond next January's leap of faith. Forecasts range from the birth of a glorious "European century" to continental upheaval and even war.

The "Europhoric" scenario, backed by the federalists and the European Commission, runs like this: the currency will galvanise the 11 economies of "Euroland", unleashing the economic power of a bloc of 270 million people. Euroland will reap the benefits of years of fiscal sacrifice. It will be fuelled by low interest rates, set by the independent Frankfurt Central Bank.

Economic frontiers will wither along with exchange risks and costs, consolidating a richer single market than America's. Consumers and business will benefit from the transparency that will allow

Euroland is a gamble that has left the experts at odds, Charles Bremner writes

easy comparison of prices in a virtuous new world that will create millions of jobs. Britain, Denmark and Sweden will rush to join.

The optimists say the euro will swiftly rival the dollar as the world's reserve currency, boosting exports from the biggest trading zone and equipping the EU with the global influence that it has long lacked. The unity of Euroland will bring national taxes into line and help to save the "European social model", the welfare state system that is now under threat. Jacques Delors, the former Commission President, said yesterday the euro would not just create a European political space, but also "stop Europe's slide towards a simple free trade zone".

In a reversal of recent US wisdom, American experts and business leaders voice fears that, thanks to the euro, America is about to be

eclipsed. However, leading Americans are also in the vanguard of those predicting catastrophe, a group that also encompasses Eurosceptics and economists in Britain and the Continent, including Germany and France.

The gloomier forecasts run like this: the recovery falters because the Continent has failed to tackle the underlying structural problems of high taxes and rigid labour laws that have held back growth and kept unemployment above 10 per cent. Euroland's "one-size-fits-all" interest rates make life miserable for some countries as performance diverges. Intensifying the tension are the widely varying tax policies among the Euroland states, which will retain fiscal sovereignty. France and Italy loosen the screws of austerity that were forced on them by Maastricht. Then the famous "asymmetric" effect kicks in. Without a true political union with an accepted central authority, economic trouble in one region will not be relieved by the migration of labour or big capital transfers, the safety valve that operates in the United States. This will sharpen the pain for the suffering economy, fuelling unemployment. Frankfurt and the EU will become popular scapegoats, feeding political tension that could blow the euro system apart.

Karl-Albrecht Schachtschneider, a German law professor who tried to challenge the euro in his country's courts, said yesterday the euro had no chance of stability. "I have no doubt that the project will fail in the next few years."

Most of those involved, from politicians to businessmen, expect the future to be much less dramatic than that painted by the Cassandras and the "Europhorics". The currency, they believe, will suffer hard bumps along the road, but will succeed in bringing overall benefit. Opinion polls show, however, that about half the EU population is not yet convinced.

Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, who backs Mr Duisenberg, dismissed as absurd suggestions of a compromise that would see the Dutchman agreeing to share the eight-year term, stepping down in favour of the Frenchman after four years. As a non-participant in the euro, Britain has no voice in choosing the bank chief, but ending the dispute is likely to be the test of Mr Blair's six months in the chair.

Diplomats expect an eventual package in which France is promised a string of high appointments.

Quarrel mars big day for single currency

By CHARLES BREMNER

THE European Union starts raising the curtain on an 11-nation single currency today at a British-chaired summit that is already clouded with acrimony over President Chirac's determination to put a Frenchman at the head of the European Central Bank. Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, opens proceedings at the weekend gathering in Brussels that marks the point of no return for the launch of the euro next January. Acting for the British EU presidency, Mr Brown will lead the 14 other finance ministers in ruling that all member states except Greece, Sweden, Britain and Denmark are fit and ready for entry to "Euroland".

After the decision is endorsed by the European Parliament tomorrow morning, Tony Blair will lead EU leaders in decreeing the end of the relevant national currencies, as planned at Maastricht in 1991.

However, the battle lines have been drawn between France and the other members, who want Wim Duisenberg of the Netherlands to take the helm of the independent bank, which will have near-absolute power over monetary policy in the euro zone. Positions hardened yesterday, with M Chirac insisting that the ECB job must go to Jean-Claude Trichet, Governor of the Banque de France.

Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, who backs Mr Duisenberg, dismissed as absurd suggestions of a compromise that would see the Dutchman agreeing to share the eight-year term, stepping down in favour of the Frenchman after four years. As a non-participant in the euro, Britain has no voice in choosing the bank chief, but ending the dispute is likely to be the test of Mr Blair's six months in the chair.

Diplomats expect an eventual package in which France is promised a string of high appointments.



Marilene van den Broek, daughter of the European Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, with her fiancé Prince Maurits, nephew of Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands, on a visit to the Dutch town of Doesburg yesterday

Eurocrats strike to protect privileges

FROM CHARLES BREMNER
IN BRUSSELS

WORK at the European Commission came to a near-standstill yesterday as thousands of staff obeyed union orders for a one-day strike against planned reforms that could threaten their job security and high salaries.

Small bands of pickets stood guard outside the 70 Brussels buildings used by the Commission as computers went unattended and telephones unanswered, two days before an

EU summit to start monetary union formally.

Unions said that more than 90 per cent of the Commission's 16,000 civil servants had stayed away from work in the third strike in 15 years at the Brussels EU executive. Officials said, however, that it was difficult to tell who was on strike and who was using the stoppage to take a day off.

The unions, who represent staff ranging from messengers to senior administrators, staged the walkout to protest against what they see as an

attempt by the Commission to enforce unilaterally a shake-up of the terms of employment of the EU's 25,000 civil servants. Under pressure from Germany and other member states, Jacques Santer, the Commission President, is committed to a full-scale review of the cosy, largely unchanged regime that has governed the life of Eurocrats for 30 years.

Most permanent Commission personnel benefit from salaries, allowances and low taxes that give them much

higher incomes than counterparts in member states.

The immediate target of union ire is a report that proposes linking pay to performance and making it possible to sack civil servants.

The report by Tony Caston, a British official, reflects the thinking of Erkki Liikanen, the Finnish Personnel Commissioner, and Carlos Trojan, the Commission's chief civil servant, on the need to bring Brussels into line with the reformed civil services in member states.

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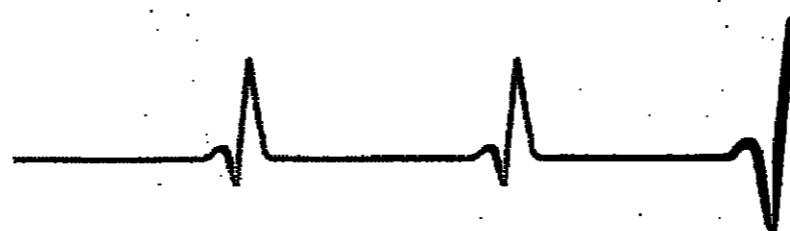


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China's jobless crisis mars May Day party

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN BEIJING

THE Chinese Communist Party and Government will formally celebrate May Day, traditionally one of the most joyous festivals in communist states, with some embarrassment today: millions of workers have been laid off and millions more are likely to be unemployed without a state benefit by the end of the year as China's painful restructuring of money-losing state-run industries continues.

"We are the so-called masters of this socialist country, so why are our lives so poor, and where are our jobs?" asked Han Dongfang, a former railway worker and China's leading independent trade unionist. Mr Han added that the Chinese leadership was "not just embarrassed, but fearful" that spreading unemployment would galvanise workers into demonstrations and social unrest. "I am sure there will be many spontaneous protests as there have been almost daily for months now in different parts of China," he said.

Foreign diplomats in Bei-

jing said that Chinese officials were likely to be embarrassed as measures to make moribund state-run industries into going concerns under free market conditions led to still more joblessness. "In all truth, what is there for workers to celebrate?" asked one foreign envoy. "Those who still have a job will be congratulating themselves on that."

The official *China Daily*, seeking to put a brave spin on International Labour Day, said that working people had been central to social and economic development since the founding of new China in 1949. "The rising number of laid-off workers, an unavoidable transitional phenomenon, is likely to remain a part of life for some time," it stated. "This will naturally affect a certain group of workers in some losing enterprises."

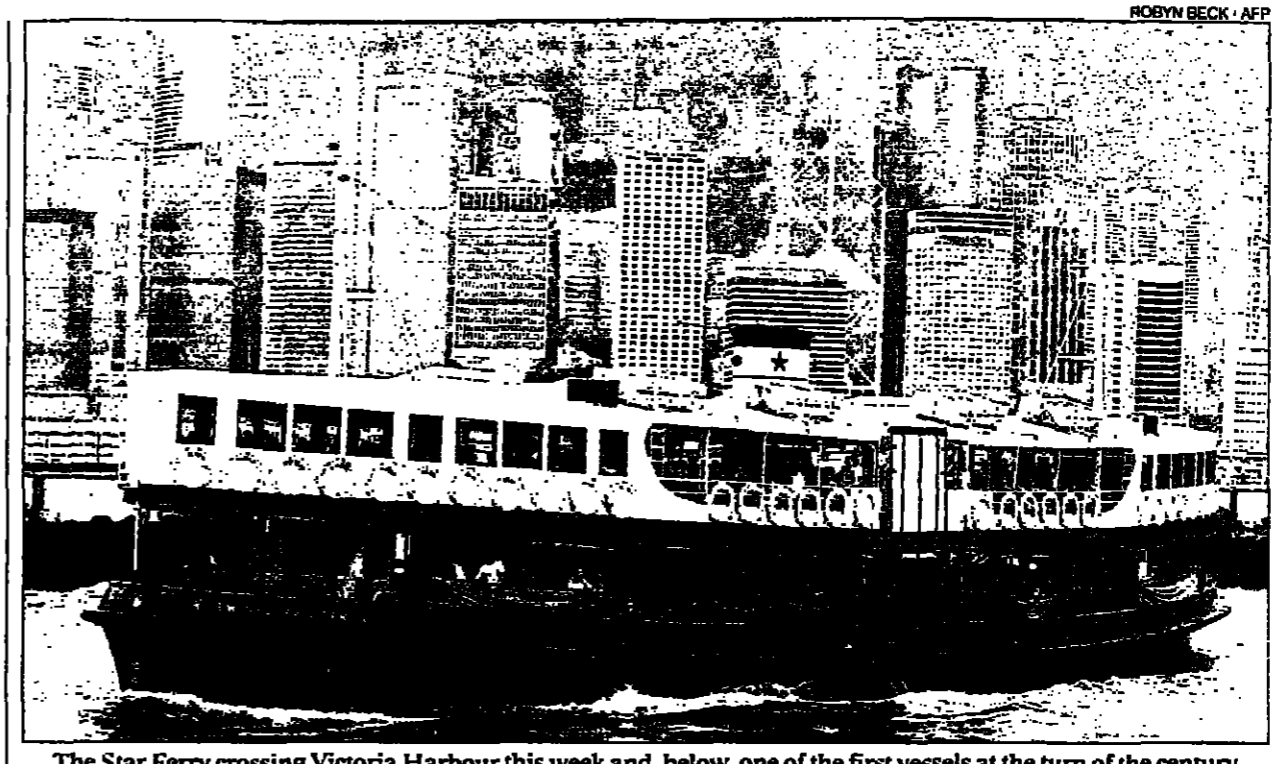
Zhu Bangzao, spokesman for the Foreign Ministry, said it was inevitable that some workers would be laid off. "This will bring temporary difficulties to them, but on the whole it is conducive to the development of the economy, and it accords with the interests of the working class."

President Jiang Zemin has said he cannot sleep at night for thinking of laid-off workers, according to the official press. Although official figures say that 11 million workers are unemployed and Hu Angang, a Chinese economist, puts the figure at between 13 and 15 million, analysts say the Chinese leadership knows that unemployment will be at least 20 per cent of the 1.2 billion population's workforce in the near future, posing a serious threat to social stability at a time when tens of millions of peasants are also raming the cities looking for work.

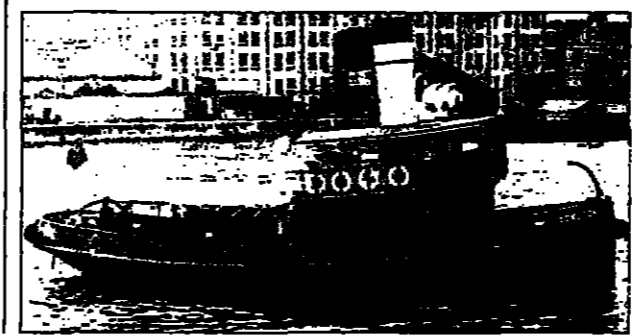
The state firms now being restructured employ about 65 per cent of China's urban workers. At the same time, envoys say, the country's fiscal resources are insufficient for any sort of comprehensive social safety net. Workers are being let go with few unemployment benefits, they say, and crime rates are rising.

President Clinton's June visit to China. She said officials had to "put a shoulder to the wheel" if the US was to ease sanctions on China.

President Jiang Zemin was philosophical. "He launched into a 15-minute soliloquy about the history of religion in civilisations in China," an official said.



The Star Ferry crossing Victoria Harbour this week and, below, one of the first vessels at the turn of the century



Ferry hits rough water

Hong Kong: The Star Ferry, a tourist icon in Hong Kong, is struggling to stay afloat in the choppy waters of Asia's economic turmoil.

The cross-harbour service, billed as the cheapest ferry ride in the world, celebrates its centenary today, but is losing money because of a sharp fall in tourists. Passengers, with tourists accounting for about a quarter, are down about 8 per cent from the first half of last year and second half of 1996, when they averaged 100,000 a day.

The firm made a profit of HK\$3 million (£230,000) last year and expects a loss of HK\$5 million this year. (Reuters)

Plea over Tibet falls flat

CHINA showed little sign of giving ground yesterday on key American demands for improvements in the treatment of human rights activists or on the question of Tibet (James Pringle writes).

Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, called in Beijing for a "speeding up of the work" in the run-up to

President Clinton's June visit to China. She said officials had to "put a shoulder to the wheel" if the US was to ease sanctions on China.

President Jiang Zemin was philosophical. "He launched into a 15-minute soliloquy about the history of religion in civilisations in China," an official said.

WORLD IN BRIEF

British U-turn on £8.4m Harare aid

Harare: The British Government is planning to back out of an £8.4 million aid agreement to help to pay for 1,500 Land Rovers for Zimbabwean police because it fears President Mugabe's administration will use them to crush political dissent (Jan Raath writes). The decision will cost Land Rover £24 million.

European diplomats confirmed reports that Clare Short, the Secretary of State for International Development, told officials to re-examine letters of intent signed in Harare last year between Zimbabwe and what is now the Department for International Development. They said the department had taken legal advice that the agreement was not legally binding.

Gates suffers fresh setback

Washington: In a new blow to Bill Gates, the Microsoft chief, 13 states launched a legal action against the company, apparently aiming to block the release of Windows 98 due in several weeks (Bonny Maddox writes). The joint antitrust action, which accuses the computer giant of unfairly trying to build a monopoly in software to navigate the Internet, will run side by side with a similar action by the Justice Department.

Leipzig tries to ban march

Leipzig: City officials who fear violent clashes between right-wing and left-wing extremists banned a rally called by a far-right party hours after a court had granted it permission. Thousands of people began travelling to Leipzig, however, and more than 6,000 police from seven states were drafted in. Earlier, a state appeal court had overturned a city ban on the march by the National Party of Germany. (AP)

Prayers for Tibet martyr

Yeshe Dorjee, left, a young Tibetan monk, prays during a demonstration in Los Angeles for Thupten Ngodup, who burnt himself to death in India in protest after police broke up an anti-China hunger strike. Thousands of Tibetans gathered in the northern Indian town of Dharamsala, the base of the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan spiritual leader, to see the body. The Tibetan government-in-exile called on six hunger strikers to end their protest in Delhi. (AFP)

Iran 'top sponsor of terror'

Washington: The US State Department yesterday branded Iran the most active state sponsor of terrorism last year, despite the election of President Khatami, a moderate. It said Tehran conducted at least 13 assassinations and supported extremist groups such as the anti-Israeli Hezbollah and the Palestinian Hamas. The criticism, in the department's annual report, comes as America is seeking a dialogue with Tehran. (AFP)

Briton on child sex charge

Bangkok: A Briton allegedly found living with two eight-year-old boys and a ten-year-old in eastern Thailand has been arrested on paedophile charges (Andrew Drummond writes). Police said that the Londoner, named as Andre Stephen Thorne, 40, had refused to give details of his address in Britain and provide a statement. The arrest comes after recent training for Thai police on child sex offenders by Northumbrian police.

'Nazi' tactics used in Nigeria

The Nigerian junta is using Nazi-style techniques to silence critics, said Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka, right, in London yesterday. The death sentence on Oladipo Diya, former deputy to General Sanj Abacha, was part of a "house-cleaning operation" to purge dissidents and intimidate journalists, he said (Helen Rumbelow writes). The Nigerian author accepted the World Press Freedom Prize on behalf of Nigerian journalist Christine Anyanwu, jailed three years ago.

A tall order for insurers

Beijing: China has insured a 200,000-year-old stalagmite for \$12 million (£7.5 million), Xinhua, the official Chinese news agency, reported. The stalagmite, 64ft long, stands among 3,000 smaller ones in the Yellow Dragon, or Huanglong, cave in Hunan province. The \$6,000 premium covers damage caused by geological changes, fires, floods, storms or lightning strikes. Earthquakes and human activity are excluded. (AFP)

Fine weather — by decree

Bangkok: Malaysian weathermen were given the perfect excuse for getting the weather wrong yesterday (Andrew Drummond writes). Contrary to widespread belief among those who looked out of their windows, the Government said there was "no haze" and told the media not to use the word. Malaysia is particularly

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An Israeli carries his son on his shoulders during Israel's 50th anniversary celebrations in Tel Aviv, while at Har Homa, right, the disputed area in east Jerusalem, right-wingers pressed the Government to build the promised settlement speedily

Netanyahu attacks anniversary carping

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

AS A divided Israel celebrated its 50th anniversary yesterday, Binyamin Netanyahu launched an attack on those at home and abroad who have used the anniversary to criticise Israeli society. "I hear the carping and the cynicism, and the fashionable doldrums around the 50th anniversary," the Prime Minister told Israel radio. "All that is carping, or barking, as the great caravan of the Jewish rebirth moves on. "Historians will look back on our achievements and they will ask: how did we find this tremendous life force in the Jewish people? It is truly nothing short of miraculous.

ISRAEL AT



We should all salute it." Mr Netanyahu was speaking hours before 10,000 ultra-nationalist Jews and hundreds of left-wing Jewish peace campaigners were separated by police at the contested settlement site of Har Homa in annexed east Jerusalem. Earlier, ultra-Orthodox Jews in Jerusalem attacked cars flying the Star of David as part of their protest against the establishment of the Jewish state in

1948. They also tried to beat up a television crew filming their refusal to take part in the two minutes' silence for the 18,000 dead in Israel's five wars. The unresolved Israeli-Palestinian conflict marred much of the celebrations, with more than two million Palestinians barred by road blocks from entry into Israel after intelligence warnings of suicide attacks by Islamic militants. Along a mile-long fence at Har Homa leftists daubed slogans reading "Hill of Blood" and "Har Homa equals war". Jonathan Levy, a spokesman for the right-wingers who planted a symbolic cornerstone at the site which is to house 32,000 Jews and thus triggered the present deadlock in the Israeli-Palestinian peace

talks, said: "We want to send the message to the world that Jerusalem is not for negotiation, and we will have thousands of Jews living on this site just a year from now." Mr Netanyahu, who has lambasted the foreign media for exaggerating the divisions in Israeli society in their anniversary coverage, said that his visit to the site of the Auschwitz Nazi death camp last week had brought home to him the anniversary's meaning. "To assume that the Jewish people could survive such a death blow without a vital centre to hold them together; that they would be lost to all the centrifugal forces, including assimilation; that they would actually achieve what

we have achieved in 50 years was not automatic." The Prime Minister — who later attended the centrepiece "Jubilee Bells", a gala concert in Jerusalem whose programme was subject to furious complaint and protests criticised by ultra-Orthodox Jews angry at plans for over a scantily-clad routine by Israel's leading modern dance troupe — brushed aside the doubts that have coloured in much Israeli media coverage of the milestone date. "We have our own state," he said. "We have our own army and ability to defend ourselves. We are a thriving economy that is fast becoming one of the two or three most technologically advanced societies in the world. We have

revived our ancient language. We have reunited our capital. We have done so much." In an official message, President Chirac of France said that despite its many achievements Israel had yet "to achieve the essential confidence and peace". Shimon Peres, the former Labour Prime Minister, voiced his support for an independent Palestinian state, an idea rejected by Mr Netanyahu. "I think for the future of Israel and in order for Israel to remain a Jewish state, we need a Palestinian state," Mr Peres told the BBC in an anniversary interview. "Otherwise we shall become a bi-national state, or if you wish, a binational tragedy. The time has come and we do

not have any other right solution but this one." Despite the peace accords between Israel and Egypt and Jordan and the fragile peace deal with the Palestinians, much of the celebration was martial in character. All over the country, Israelis cheered and waved as the air force staged a fly-past. Paratroopers and the navy were the centrepiece of Independence Day displays off the crowded Tel Aviv coastline. Hundreds of troops and armed police were on alert for Arab terrorism against a celebration on a day the Palestinians have named *Al Nakbah* or the Catastrophe. In the West Bank refugee camp where Sami Rafai, 29, was born, he could not bring

himself to watch the fireworks lighting up the horizon. "The celebrations are like knives in the heart," he said. In Jerusalem's Independence Park, where thousands of Israelis danced and sang, many Jews across the political spectrum said that they were more worried about divisions between Jews than future conflict with the Arabs. The right-wing Knesset Speaker, Dan Tichon, said that religious and secular Jews should not let their growing rifts fracture modern Israel, as ancient Israel was torn apart by disunity. "We cannot return to be like the factionalised land of the 12 tribes," he said. "Let us all act with tolerance."

Letters, page 25

Rift with Cook is healed by envoy

BY MICHAEL EVANS DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE Israeli Ambassador in London made a point of praising Robin Cook for his diplomacy, closing the chapter on the strained relations that followed the Foreign Secretary's controversial visit to Israel in March. At an Israeli reception in a London hotel to mark the 50th anniversary of the state of Israel, Dror Zeigerman said he wanted to express his appreciation for the efforts made by Mr Cook. He also thanked him for his determination in setting up the Nazi gold conference in London last December. The conference examined what happened to the gold



The Prince of Wales and Dror Zeigerman, right, at a London synagogue service

belonging to individuals and governments that was looted by the Nazis. Mr Zeigerman's effusive praise for Mr Cook, and also for Tony Blair following the Prime Minister's recent visit to Israel, indicated that there were no longer any hard

feelings between the Israeli Government and the Foreign Office. "We have established a good working relationship with the Foreign Office," the ambassador said. During Mr Cook's visit to Israel in March, a planned

dinner engagement with Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, was cancelled at the last moment because of supposed outrage over the Foreign Secretary's visit to a Palestinian memorial for Arabs killed by Israelis in 1948.

Diplomatic Gore embarks on the 'Holy Land primary'

DIPLOMACY is a difficult business. Albert Gore will appreciate that better than most by the time he completes his Middle East tour.

The American Vice-President is wearing several, at times barely compatible, hats during his trip. The centrepiece of his visit is as the senior American representative at Israel's 50th anniversary ceremonies. He is at pains to stress the importance of this role. He was guest of honour at the Jubilee Bells Concert in Jerusalem last night that represented the climax of official activities. He will take every chance to be seen with ordinary Israelis as well. After the music, however, Mr Gore is obliged to transform himself from best friend of Israel to neutral international statesman. His schedule originally suggested talks with Yasser Arafat in the West Bank this morning. That plan

The next US presidential campaign begins here, Tim Hames reports from Israel's anniversary party

was quietly dropped when it was pointed out that Israel would still be in the midst of its celebrations and Palestinian youths were likely to mark matters by burning the Israeli and American flags barely yards from Mr Gore's meeting. He will now travel to Saudi Arabia for discussions with King Fahd instead and, more importantly, a photo opportunity with American troops in the desert. He will then return to Israel and liaise, briefly, with Mr Arafat tomorrow. No matter how he tries to disguise it, Mr Gore is here as much as a presidential candidate as an Administration

official. This is the Holy Land primary. That leaves him with the delicate task of appearing more pro-Israel than his own President or Secretary of State, but not so blatantly as to cause a domestic political controversy. In fairness, this is not an act of insincerity on his behalf. As a senator, Mr Gore has an impeccable voting record on Middle East matters. If elected to the Oval Office he would make Bill Clinton seem agnostic on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Mr Gore's true intentions are indicated by the presence of his political advisers on this trip and his own TV crew that will doubtless record every-

thing for strategic use later. This will rather inhibit the degree to which Mr Gore can apply meaningful pressure on Mr Netanyahu in advance of Monday's summit in London. Mr Gore cannot completely embrace the Israeli Prime Minister — and not only for fear of undercutting Madeleine Albright. American Jews have a tenuous relationship with the Prime Minister. Mr Netanyahu remains extremely effective at mobilising US support for Israel's security concerns. But his government's backing for the demands of orthodox rabbis have infuriated American Jews of the reform tradition. This is, ultimately, a political trip pure and simple. The New Hampshire primary is now a mere 22 months away. Mr Netanyahu, an astute analyst of US politics, knows this and will happily exploit it.

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CRIES UNHEARD: MARY BELL

The shocking end to prison life and



Askham Grange Prison, where Mary was meant to be prepared for her release, as a 23-year-old woman, into a world in which she had last been free as a child

In the third extract from her controversial book *Gitta Sereny* describes the appalling consequences of Mary's release into a world for which she was not emotionally ready

In June 1977, Mary was moved from Syal, the maximum security women's prison where she had been an inmate for four years, to Moor Court, an open prison. Having been in high security prisons since the age of 11, she found it impossible to cope with the idea that here she was free to make her own decisions and to take responsibility for herself. Together with another girl, she absconded and had a juvenile affair with Clive, one of two young men who had picked them up hitch-hiking. Afterwards she was punished by being sent to Risley, the most notorious remand centre in England. She was so unhappy there that she asked to be moved back to Syal. Then, in September 1979, she was told that the Parole Board

had recommended to the Home Office that she be released in May of the following year. For those nine months she was transferred to Askham Grange, an open prison in York, where she would, it was thought, be carefully prepared for her release, as a 23-year-old woman, back into the world in which she had last been free as an 11-year-old child. MARY was very much in two minds: not about telling me — which she obviously felt a need to do — but about seeing this part of her experience appear in print. I, too, feel reluctant, and yet the consequence of it at the end of her 12 years of imprisonment for having killed two little boys at the age of 11 was so appalling that I cannot see how, in a story of this young woman's life, a mention of it, however brief, can be avoided.

age, but they overlook that men go through crises, too, and I think that's what happened to him. "I think he did love me or, at least, fell a bit in love with me. On a second home leave he took me on a trip and we stayed in a hotel in Finchley for four days. But not long afterwards he told his wife, and I met her. She was so nice, so honest with me. I couldn't ... you know, I couldn't see him ruin his life and his marriage." "And that was the end of it?" "Yes, he came to say goodbye to me when I was going to be released and he gave me a golden ring." Unfortunately, as it happened, that was not quite the end. Months before this, at the beginning of her pre-release scheme, the senior medical officer at Askham Grange had suggested that she should go on the Pill.

"But I thought that was quite offensive," Mary said. "I said: 'What are you inferring?' That I'm going to go on a rampage, jump on every male I see?" And he said, no, that they just offered it to women on pre-release, so that our bodies would get used to it. "Well, I thought that was really invading my privacy; also, I was scared of these pills, I'd read of the possible side-effects and, you know, I wasn't planning anything. And then, when this happened with this man [which was her first contact with a man except for her brief fumble with Clive more than a year and a half before], well, he was in total control, and he seemed to know what he was doing. I didn't question ... I didn't think.

"Anyway, when I realised I was pregnant I had to talk to somebody, so I told the Askham Grange probation officer, who was particularly nice. I lied, of course, about who it was. And she said I had to think about what I wanted to do, and I had to talk to ... the man. So I told him. He took me out to lunch at a restaurant and I told him that I didn't want to get an abortion. I said I wanted to be pregnant. And he said that it was my decision, entirely my decision.

"He said I was an animal that needed to be trained"

"He held my hand, sort of stroking it, and he told me not to be worried, that it was entirely up to me ... He said that if I had the baby, of course it would be very difficult, but it didn't matter, we would find a means of ... a way of living. "Well, you know, it was impossible, wasn't it? So I had the abortion. But if I think that almost the first thing I did after 12 years in prison for killing two babes was to kill the baby in me ..."

Did you have doubts about your decision?

"Not doubts," she said. "Just many thoughts. Given what had happened to me as a child, I felt that I ought to have been aborted. Had there been common sense and an iota of responsibility in my 16-year-old mother's family, surely I would have been?"

That is why I had no doubt, I wouldn't bring a child into this world that I wasn't ready for, and would — or might — ultimately resent. Nine months out of prison: what kind of a mother would I have been?

"And anyway, I wouldn't have been allowed to keep it and it would have been emotionally as deprived as I. Had I not committed murder as a child, I think the moral argument about abortion would not have occupied me as much as it did. It was terrible that the first responsible decision I had to make was one so gravely ... she paused. "... linked."

When you decided to have the abortion, I asked her, was it your own childhood that was uppermost in your mind, or was it Martin and Brian?

"It was both," she said. "I was thinking very mixed ..."

She was trying to say — and it was the first time that she had ever expressed it, I believe, even to herself — that her childhood and her killing the two small boys were not divisible. "It was just totally impossible," she said. "I talked, apologised to the baby in me in my own way: 'Next time round,' I said."

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THE TIMES

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CRIES UNHEARD: MARY BELL

a painful decision

Why all the experts agreed that Mary Bell should be allowed to keep and bring up her child

In 1982, two years after her release, Mary met two people who were to be decisively important for her. The first was a young man (we will call him Rob), at almost still a boy, whom she met at a party. They began a relationship and when Rob bought a house by the seaside, he asked Mary to move in with him and gave her an engagement ring. "It all went terribly wrong in the end. I was probably too much for him to cope with," she said. "He was only a boy. But I thought he was an amazingly good person and I still think he was, despite everything that happened. Rob would become the father of her child."

to cry. "It will never be over for them; it will never be over for me." She has always brought Martin and Brian up, and always in connection with her own child — not so much the details of what she did to the two little boys, she never told me those, but rather her sadness for the parents, and her despair about herself. Had Pat ever thought, I asked — as I had considered when I first talked to Mary — that this remorse was put on for her benefit, that Mary might be manipulating her? "I certainly asked myself this at the beginning. I knew, of course, that some people in Red Bank, and many more later in the prisons, talked a lot about her being so manipulative. But the situation now was different and it was new for her. I was actually trying to work with her, in a therapeutic sense, and she was responding to it. I think when her mother finally agreed to see me — and don't forget, this was while Mary was still living with them — it was at least partly because Betty realised I was getting closer to Mary and was panicked by this. I saw this very quickly. She really was terribly afraid of me. This was, after all, what she had tried to prevent all these years. It was her nightmare. "After my various experiences of Betty, even though I knew none of the details I would learn later from Mary and then from you, I became certain that the acts Mary committed in 1968 could be understood only in the context of whatever acts her mother had committed in Mary's early childhood. And associating

this certainty with the despair I witnessed in Mary, yes, I was entirely sure that her remorse was real and true." In April 1983 Pat took Mary to see two psychiatrists in London. Although it took the two experts six months to write their reports, both did eventually say that it was entirely safe for Mary to have a child. The two reports came through in October 1983. Mary threw her pills away and two weeks later, she was pregnant. "I had to treat Mary like any Schedule One offender," Pat said. "In her case there was always this problem of her high profile. We had to ensure that the information about her pregnancy and all the decisions which would be made remained secure. This is why, when I called a case conference in January 1984, the heads of departments — health, police, social services, legal and probation — all attended."

At the conference her mother was described as mentally unbalanced; Billy Bell as irresponsible; with many criminal convictions. About Mary herself, it was said that she was emotionally and physically battered as a baby, that the battering continued through to 1968, by which time Betty and Billy were living apart and divorce was pending. There were old psychiatric reports from Dr Westbury, Dr Rowbotham and Dr Cuthbert, which spoke of bed-wetting, including daytime incontinence, but of otherwise "normal development" (Cuthbert), and the new reports, which declared her safe for motherhood. "It was agreed nothing

would go on a computer," Pat said. "The question on the table was who should have care and control over the child once it was born, the parents or the social services?" "My own feeling was, and had been for months, that while the child should and would no doubt be made a ward of court, and everybody in fact agreed on that, Mary must not only be allowed to keep her child, but that the parents — Mary and Rob — should have care and control."



Mary Bell's wish for a child highlighted the loss she had caused



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Queen of May



Crêpe embroidered coat dress with fur collar by Dolce & Gabbana, 175 Sloane Street, London SW1. 0171-235 0335

Call me early, mother dear, for I'm to be Queen of the May... At Tunstall Primary School, where I learnt the principles of English grammar and the fact that Life is Not Fair (all one needs to know, really), they were very keen on May Day. There was a procession of all the children, and one of the big girls was crowned with flowers and sat on a dais with her attendants, while the rest of us, mouth-breathing heavily, stumped around a rickety maypole, on whose base a rather stout little boy was made to sit, in order to stop it falling over.

It must have been incredibly sweet to watch — an absolutely traditional May Day celebration, except for the fact that it never actually took place on May 1. Our headmistress, distrusting the unkind caprices of the English weather, always arranged it for somewhere nearer the beginning of June.

Shivering up the Kings Road in the teeth of a brisk north-easterly, it is hard to believe that summer has arrived. A considerable effort of imagination is required to convince oneself that it will ever be warm enough to cast a single cloud. But it is an effort that must be made, or you will be sorry. By the beginning of June, the sun will be shining, the roses will be in bloom, and if you haven't bought your summer frocks, it will be too late. The shops will be offering nothing but autumn tweed tailcoats.

Just now, the high street looks like a rather chilly herbaceous border — rails full of Tocca-inspired dresses in organza and lace and silk and fine lawn, spangled all over with embroidered flowers.

Several places — Morgan and Kookai, for example — have developed a technique of embossing material so that it seems, from a distance, to be embroidered. Ingenious though

this trompe l'oeil is, there is something particularly luxurious about real embroidery, and there is so much of it about at the moment, nicely made and extraordinarily good value, that one can afford to indulge oneself.

At Marnoon, rose-embroidered T-shirts are £24.95; a white sleeveless blouse scattered with pink gillyflowers is £29.95, and a handsome brace of cream waistcoats, almost as intricately stitched as the one

CUTTING EDGE
JANE SHILLING

in *The Tailor of Gloucester*, are £49.95. Karen Millen has a drifty skirt in palest tea rose silk, embroidered with deeper pink roses, for £89.95 and a lingerie-strapped dress in the same material, £120. At Warehouse there is an artless white broderie anglaise dress for £40, and a rather grand floor-length, self-embroidered lined silk shift for £65 in cream or black (the black is lined in flesh colour). Oasis have flowered camisoles for £19.99, and embroidered net cardigans for £34.99. But joint winners for this year's prettiest dress (and such astounding value that I think I might buy both) are Oasis's pale green, high waisted, knee length, embroidered organza shift, £54.99 and French Connection's ravishing organza slip, virginal in white with yellow flowers, more sophisticated in pale grey with orange sprigs, £65.

These fragile little dresses require fragile accessories — don't even think of subverting the look with Spice Girl monster trainers. Kitten-heeled mules would be perfect. L. K. Bennett have them in cherry pink and faun suede for £79.99. And so would Bally



Oyster satin dress by Miu Miu and embroidered shawl by Basia Zarzycka

shoes (back in fashion, according to *Vogue* — hurrah!). At Bruno Magli in Sloane Street they have them in navy, white, lime green and a brilliant lipstick pink, reduced (they are having a rebuilding sale for the next month or so) from a heart stopping £99.99 to a rather more sensible £39.99. And if the weather takes a capricious turn, you can carry on looking fragile and flower-like and still keep warm by wrapping yourself in a Chinese embroidered silk shawl — the summer's equivalent of

the pashmina. Good examples can be dauntingly expensive, so if your great aunt won't lend you the one she keeps draped over the piano, you had better start searching in second hand shops. Persistence pays. A couple of years ago, I found, in a Canterbury junk shop, a cream flowered shawl that had been turned, some time in the 1930s, into a chic little semi-fitted jacket. Heresy, no doubt, but wonderfully pretty and sophisticated. The very thing for an urbane May Queen.

HOT TIP

Those who suffer from flaking and cracked lips may find that petroleum or lanolin products make things worse. Mind Your Mouth, however, soothes sore lips with honey, beeswax, Royal Jelly and vitamin E. With a strong Anise aroma, this is a lipsalve for those who like the taste of liquorice.

Mind Your Mouth by Origins. £6.50, available at Selfridges. Tel: 0171 629 1234.

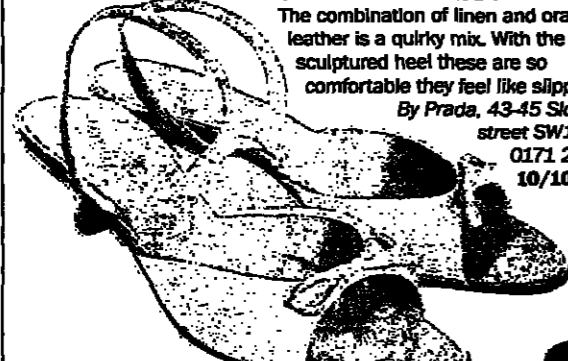
Objects of desire

For sheer decadence, the notion of massaging tiny particles of gold leaf into your skin every day is hard to beat. The gel can be applied under or over make-up, and the gold particles give the skin extra luminence. Divinaura by Guerlain, £42 from major department stores. Tel: 0181 998 1646



These exotic earrings are incredibly delicate and reminiscent of Galliano's couture collection for Dior. But these are affordable. Designed by Naomi Mendlesohn and inspired by her many trips abroad, they are part of a small mailorder range. Ethnic earrings, £39.99 plus £2 for P&P. Tel: 0171 409 0811

ORANGE AND LINEN BOW HEELS, £155
The combination of linen and orange leather is a quirky mix. With the low, sculptured heel these are so comfortable they feel like slippers.
By Prada, 43-45 Sloane Street SW1. Tel: 0171 235 0008 10/10



Perfect for day or night, this summer's kitten heel shoe is elegant, comfortable, and adds height

SIX OF THE BEST

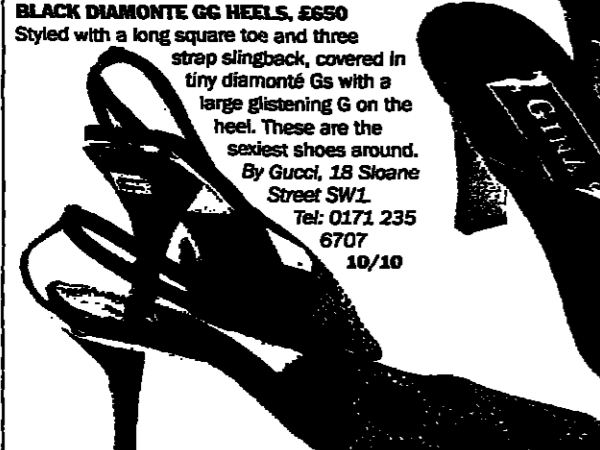
BEIGE SNAKESKIN KITTEN HEELS, £135
The elasticated snakeskin strap means these shoes fit properly as well as flattering the foot.
By Joseph Azagury for Russell & Bromley, 24/25 New Bond Street W1. Tel: 0171 629 6903 10/10



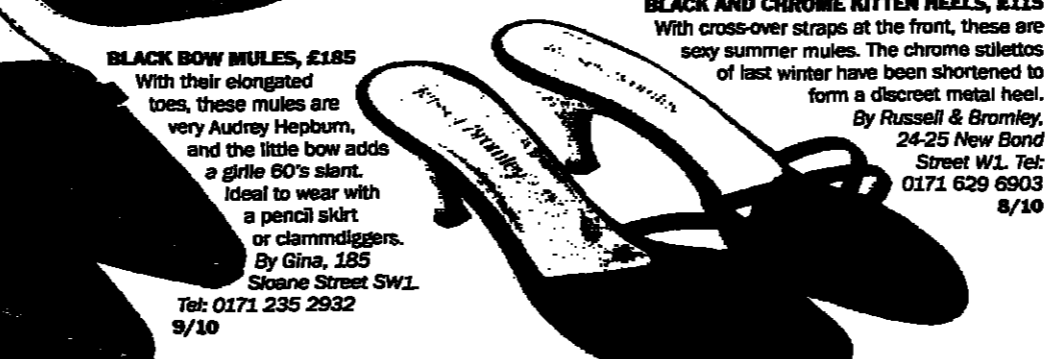
RED KITTEN HEELS, £175
In the softest cherry red leather, this slingback keeps your foot in place. Very comfortable, shoes you can wear all day.
By Jimmy Choo, 20 Motcombe Street SW1. Tel: 0171 235 6008 8/10



BLACK DIAMONTE GG HEELS, £690
Styled with a long square toe and three strap slingback, covered in tiny diamonds Gs with a large glistening G on the heel. These are the sexiest shoes around.
By Gucci, 18 Sloane Street SW1. Tel: 0171 235 6707 10/10



BLACK BOW MULES, £185
With their elongated toes, these mules are very Audrey Hepburn, and the little bow adds a girlie 60's slant. Ideal to wear with a pencil skirt or clammidgers.
By Gina, 185 Sloane Street SW1. Tel: 0171 235 2932 9/10



BLACK AND CHROME KITTEN HEELS, £115
With cross-over straps at the front, these are sexy summer mules. The chrome soletas of last winter have been shortened to form a discreet metal heel.
By Russell & Bromley, 24-25 New Bond Street W1. Tel: 0171 629 6903 8/10



Compiled by Deborah Brett

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Perception is reality?

All of us know that the sensations produced by the same object can vary with the circumstances. Lukewarm water will appear hot to a cold hand, and cold to a hot hand. Colours look very different under a microscope. Even the Sun in the heavens, we see only as it was eight minutes before.



Lord Saatchi

What is real? After 2000 years of human progress it seems that the real nature of things remains as inaccessible as it was to Aristotle. "Fire burns both here and in Persia, but what is thought just changes before our very eyes." The decision, he said, "rests with perception".

An edited extract from *The Times* Lecture given by Lord Saatchi at Worcester College, Oxford, on Tuesday

Is what we perceive, real? In Plato's allegory of the human condition, we were tied to chains in a dark cave, able to see a passing parade of objects we thought were real, but which were, in fact, only the shadows cast by the objects.

For early theologians, this state of ignorance was a fitting punishment. Because in man's fallen state after Eden we were denied full knowledge, which was to be reserved only for God.

After all, we got only one bite of the apple, not the whole tree. We would know truth only in the life beyond the grave. But there came a time when it was believed that rational methods — observation, experiment, verification — could establish the truth that previously only God possessed.

We began to believe in the idea of a science of man that would release us from the darkness of Plato's cave. Where ethics, politics, economics, psychology, philosophy would overcome prejudice and superstition and bring us to a Utopia of wisdom and happiness, where "men shall beat their swords into plowshares... the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid... the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

We began to believe in the idea of a science of man

An earthly paradise of universal enlightenment. Unfortunately, it has not worked out quite like that. Instead, we find the inconvenient and stubborn fact that outside Newton's Universe, where physical laws govern reality, the world is conditioned by perception. And perception is conditioned by the distorting factors of society, genetics, class, upbringing, and the conscious or unconscious interests of the perceiver.

Marx and Freud certainly believed in the power of appearance and illusion over "objective" reality. That our perception of events is unavoidably determined by forces over which we have no control — Freud's unconscious drives formed in childhood; Marx's class-bound morality.

Philosophers have always sought a path to a version of reality that could be accepted as universal truth or law. They wanted to help mankind avoid the chaos of Hobbes's *bellum omnium contra omnes*, the war of all against all.

In the doctrine of the Church, truth was to be found in the ancient Gospels and biblical texts, interpreted for us by a benevolent priesthood.

Others were certain that "good" meant being conducive to human happiness; or moving towards the greatest general good, the *summum bonum*; or achieving the greatest balance of pleasure over pain.

But all these certainties crumbled together when Professor Ayer pronounced the death of the syllogism as the paradigm of deductive reasoning. He showed that the apparently logical progression: *Fragrant roses is good. Fragrant roses. I am good.*

falls because the premise that fragrant roses is good is open to question by those who prefer leggy, straggly roses with few blooms.

So that man's perceptions of good and evil, right and wrong, turned out to be just an expression of taste with no objective basis whatsoever — the different to preferring hamste glacié to a bacon sandwich.

Even the perception of physical objects cannot be relied on. Descartes famously said that he couldn't be sure that the table at which he was sitting was really there, because the only thing about which he could be certain was

that while he was thinking that the table might not be there after all, it was definite he was there looking at it, because he thought he was.

One of Tom Stoppard's characters explained: although it appeared to a casual observer standing on the platform at Paddington station that the train had left Paddington, in fact "all the observable phenomena indicated that Paddington had left the train".

It seems that once we say what we perceive in terms of what we feel, what we believe; once we express opinions or beliefs; or attempt to offer explanations or descriptions or forecasts, then error, doubt and uncertainty come to the fore.

So it is in those psychological tests that confront subjects with a picture and ask them to describe what they see.

In one such test respondents are shown the identical picture of a crowded subway train in which one man stands brandishing a knife. Different respondents produce quite different explanations of what is happening in the picture.

Some say the knife-man is a thief. Others that he is a plain-clothes policeman. Sometimes the man, who is white, is said to be black.

But if white is black, what is real? In his film *Rashomon*, Kurosawa showed us four very different versions of "reality". In 12th-century Kyoto, a couple are ambushed: the wife is raped, the husband killed. After the event four people recall the attack. By altering the perspective and order of events for each character, we perceive the unreality of their contrasting perceptions.

This is perhaps why English law would not rely on any of the versions provided by Kurosawa's witnesses. Our legal system prefers the principle of *mens rea*, the guilty mind. What matters is not what was perceived in the eyes of observers, but what was perceived in the mind of the accused.

This failure to pin down reality independent of perception is not for want of effort. "If science can predict eclipses," Professor Popper once asked, "why can't it predict revolutions?"

So there has been a long search in the humanities for general laws about the real world as robust as the laws of physics. Buoyed up by Popper's warning that even in the natural sciences, predicted correlations do not entail final proof or explanation (the closest approach to proof being a succession of unsuccessful attempts at falsification), scholars in the humanities have long sought a set of general, restorable, explanatory propositions applicable to the whole area of collective human behaviour.

For example, the painter Delacroix once proposed as a universal law that if an artist cannot capture in a sketch a man falling from a 5th-floor window before he hits the ground, then that artist would never be capable of monumental work.

But the quantitative fetishists among us would argue that to verify this proposition it would be necessary to throw 100 people out of a window (or is it one person a 100 times?) and observe the results. Think of the fun of deciding who those 100 people might be.

Similarly, the proponents of an objective study of personality have insisted that Freud, like Delacroix, based his generalisations on too few cases that a scientist would blush for him. Instead, a true science of personality would base its theories on actual behavioural measurement.

Thus, if the theory was that, say, breast-fed babies are more optimistic in temperament as adults than those who are not, then an experimenter could apply a measure of optimism or attitudes to hundreds of each and arrive at a form of verifiable proof.

The father of this quantitative approach to psychology was Professor B. F. Skinner, from Harvard. He took the view that all this Freudian nonsense about childhood was so much unscientific mumbo-jumbo. In his more measurable approach, people merely responded to certain stimuli — reward and punishment: pleasure and pain.

Laboratory rats, he told his students, moved towards pleasure, in the form of cheese, and away from pain, in the form of an electric shock. These laboratory experiments proved his theory, so he said.

But what Professor Skinner overlooked is the ghastly possibility that some human beings are so complicated that they can actually get their cheese from electric shocks.

Economists have told us that there are measurable and predictable relationships between economic phenomena: that the gradient of certain curves can predict the elasticity of demand for a certain product at a certain price; that a society's marginal propensity to consume will change mathematically in accordance with changes in personal taxation.

But if all this were true it would mean that we could banish recession in the same way we banished whooping cough. It would mean that the current sight in Britain of simultaneously low inflation and low unemployment must be an optical illusion, because the curves say it can't be done.

In so-called "political science", too, you find the same desire for quantification, verification, laws. The materialist determinism first propounded by Marx, in which economics determines politics, found its highest expression in, of all places, Conservative Central Office.

The latest such effort before the last election stated that movements in real personal disposal income over the last 12 months would be followed by movements in householders' net expectations about their financial position in the next 12 months, which would be followed by movements in voting intention for the Conservative Party.

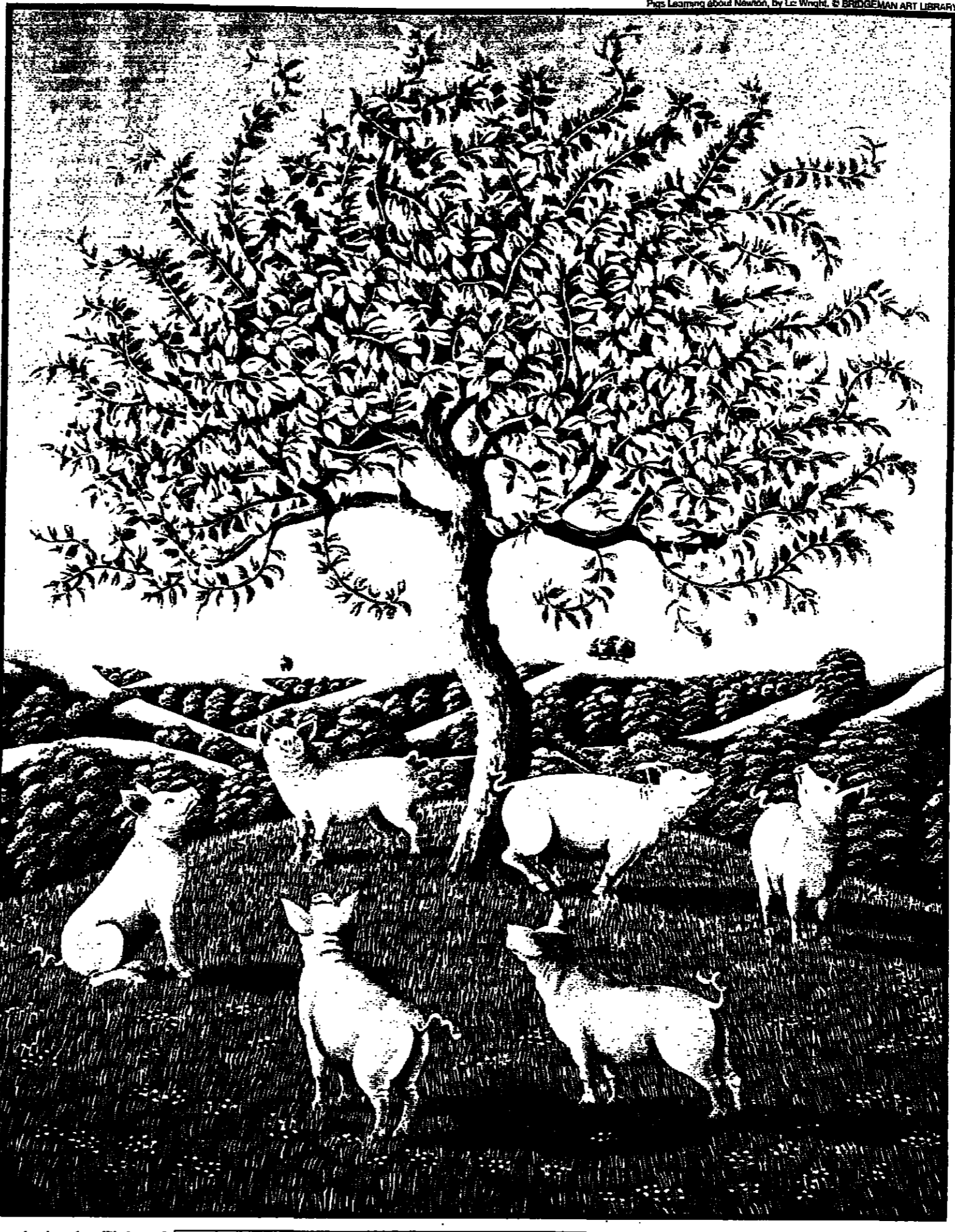
This fine theory met the laboratory equivalent of Waterloo at precisely midnight on the evening of May 1, 1997.

Or let's just say with Professor Popper that the evidence failed to confirm the hypothesis.

In the end, all attempts to place ethics, politics, economics, art, psychology or any of the humanities within the canons of scientific objectivity have failed. There remains an irremediable tentativeness about the logically perplexing question of what is real.

The social sciences have not as yet found their Newton. But there is no dishonour in this defeat. Even medical experts have been obliged to recognise the infinite power of human perception to control "reality". They say that the act of suicide proves that, in extremis, the human mind is omnipotent. It has the ultimate power, even to the point of bringing around the final destruction of the human body. A mere cold, or backache — or the perception of them — would pose little problem to such an all-powerful force.

This is presumably why 50 per cent of all the drugs prescribed in the world today are said to be prescribed for conditions which are psychosomatic in origin — in other words, where the physical reality of the symptoms is



brought about by afflictions of the mind. Doctors tell me that Prozac, for example, is a drug which alters human beings' perception of themselves. Its effect is to overcome feelings of inadequacy or low self-esteem. So that the user says: "I am huge." It can apparently transform marriages, careers, relationships.

But there is a catch. When patients stop the course of tablets they can become confused between their perception of themselves and their own reality.

One doctor took a 2am call from a patient who had recently finished her course of Prozac. Her anguished cry for help was "doctor, I am not myself!" But which was the real "self"?

Or is it just that, as the *Rubaiyat* says, "Myself am Heaven and am Hell"? Perhaps in the end the answer will have to come not from philosophers but from engineers.

This was brought home to me when I met a delegation of Japanese businessmen passing through London. They had been visiting top universities. What, I asked, were they doing?

They turned out to be Japanese electronics companies who had noted with interest the \$300 billion spent annually on pharmaceutical products. But what, I asked, had electronics to do with pharmaceuticals?

These companies had carried out pilot research in Japan which had identified to their satisfaction the electronic movements in the brain associated with human emotions. Happiness. Sadness. Joy. Despair. Pleasure. Pain.

Each of these emotions, they found, was linked to a magnetic impulse in the brain. If they could identify them, measure them, then they could change them. The motherlode.

So they were looking for the best university research department in the world on which to bestow a grant to continue their research, and find, once and for all, a scientific solution to the problem of human happiness. I wish them well. In the meantime, what can we weak creatures do but accept the uncomfortable fact that much of what seems real to us is governed by our own perceptions.

Perhaps the answer will have to come from engineers

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Kosovo: there is a solution

But the West has yet to grasp it, argues Noel Malcolm

People say that nothing has been learnt from the Bosnian conflict, but that is not true. It is clear that the EU Foreign Affairs Commissioner, at a conference in Kosovo last week "We have learnt much about Mr Milosevic's tenacity, and he has learnt a lot about our lack of resolution."

That wry remark expressed some of the frustration, and desperation, that many Western diplomats now feel about Slobodan Milosevic, the Yugoslav President, and the crisis in Kosovo. They are determined not to make the same blunders, but haunted by the knowledge that so many of the parameters of the problem remain the same as before.

Yet the stakes this time are higher. In the case of Bosnia, the "domino-theory" was never plausible: the worst that could happen (and did) was prolonged mass-murder inside Bosnia, while the world looked on. In Kosovo's case, the consequences of large-scale fighting will not stop at its borders. If the conflict spreads to all-out war, not only will tens of thousands of Kosovo Albanians be killed, but a million refugees could

drop it now will be to guarantee his political eclipse.

Why are Western powers so set against even the discussion of independence as a long-term possibility? Part of the problem may be that they still do not understand Dr Rugova's case. They think the Kosovo Albanians demand independence just because Kosovo is their "ethnic territory". So they fear setting a terrible precedent, whereby ethnic groups in other states (including Albanians in Macedonia) would demand the redrawing of other borders.

In fact, Dr Rugova's case is based not on ethnic geography but on constitutional law. In the old (Titoist) Yugoslavia, Kosovo was, in theory, an "autonomous province" of Serbia, but it also functioned as a federal entity in the Yugoslav Federation. The legal argument is therefore quite simple: the old Yugoslavia dissolved into its constituent units, each of which could become an independent state, and Kosovo has the right to be treated as one of those units.

Far from undermining the integrity of Macedonia, Dr Rugova's argument reinforces it: Macedonia's own integral statehood, as a former Yugoslav entity, rests on the same legal foundations. In terms of practical politics, too, Macedonia has more to fear from the frustration of Dr Rugova's aims than from their fulfilment. The strongest stimulus to the radicalisation of the Macedonian Albanians will be a constant pressure-cooker of revolt and suppression in Kosovo.

The West fears a precedent may be set for others

Any satisfaction of Albanian demands in Kosovo can and should be accompanied, therefore, by stronger Western commitments to maintaining the integrity of Macedonia's borders — and Montenegro's.

Curiously, even some Serbian nationalists are more willing to contemplate the long-term independence of Kosovo than the Western politicians. They worry about the difference in birthrates between Albanians and Serbs, fearing that, on present trends, the former will outnumber the latter in the whole of Serbia within two or three generations.

Many Serbs accept that, in say fifty years' time, Kosovo will not be part of Serbia, or even Yugoslavia. The problem is how to get from now to then. I recently asked one senior member of Dr Rugova's government: "If you could have republican status in Yugoslavia now, with the long-term possibility of independence, but with a moratorium on that long-term option, how long could the moratorium be?"

He replied: "We have waited for centuries: we could wait at least another ten years." It is strange that this, the one practical direction in which negotiations could move, is the one direction Western Governments seem determined to exclude.

The author's latest book, *Kosovo: A Short History*, is published by Macmillan.



The end of Opposition

With Blair in the limelight, adversarial politics is returning to the shadows

The early summer of 1979 was, for us new government backbenchers, an uneasy time. The certainties which settled upon the Government's later years hardly seemed evident. We could see that the Labour Opposition were going nowhere. We knew we were going somewhere. But where? That was less clear.

Among my liveliest new companions was the MP for Watford, Tristan Gatfield-Jones. We would sit around in the Tea Room self-importantly discussing what personal course we should chart, and whether we should declare it in our maiden speeches. I recall Tristan's announcing a putative theory of what might be called *internal opposition*, and trying it out on a Tea Room audience (no whip in sight). The theory was that, as the official Opposition were pitiful, serious opposition (of a constructive sort) should come from within the governing party's own ranks.

I think Tristan's friends advised against making such a declaration: his maiden speech was about the Pacific Banaban islands and of a conventional sort, though quite sparkling. "The borough of Watford is a considerable distance from the island of Banaba... though it has never been vouchsafed to us whether we are regarded as the last outpost of southern gentility or the first pothole on the road to Wigan pier." There was nothing about internal opposition, which was fortunate, as Tristan was later to become a Grand Inquisitor, first for Margaret Thatcher, then for John Major, forcing through the Maastricht legislation. He is now in the Lords. None of this might have happened if that speech had been a blast on the trumpet for in-house opposition.

But he was right. The 18 years which followed, though they achieved much, might have been improved by an intelligent internal opposition within the Conservative Party.

The official Opposition certainly did nothing for us. Lay aside for a moment all that A-level stuff about the glorious role of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, the need for ministers and policies to be tested, criticised and corrected, and ask: what did the immense efforts made by successive Leaders of the Opposition between 1979 and 1997 — the sound, the fury, the press-releases and the midnight oil — achieve? How would the governments and policies of the day have been different if James

Callaghan, Michael Foot, Neil Kinnock, John Smith and Tony Blair had not been there? The major — indeed the only — impact of these men was upon their own parties and the voters, not the governing party. Did they really "test" Thatcher or Major?

Quite the contrary. Government was tested not by its formal opponents, but by events: the Falklands; the economy; European unification; Black Wednesday; Iraq; by the natural results of government's own policies (unemployment; coal strikes; poll-tax riots); by internal mutterings and mirth (Ian Gilmour, Michael Heseltine, Bill Cash, John Redwood); by the Government's own inquiries (Scott, Nolan); and by the media.

Now this might read oddly, a year on from May 1, 1997. That was certainly a victory for the Opposition, but it was not a victory for the politics of opposition. Until the end, John Major knew that those who could derail his Government sat behind him, not opposite. Against a near-wrecked Tory party, Tony Blair was still unable to stop the railways being sold off.

Defenders of what is (wrongly) supposed to be the ancient theory of official opposition will say that the impotence sprang from a ten-year aberration: the failure of the Labour Party to think of a credible alternative ideology, a failure which, near the end, Kinnock, Smith and Blair rectified. But of course the reverse is the case. It was when the Opposition stopped trying to think of an alternative ideology that their fortunes picked up. Serious ideological challenges do damage administrations; but such challenges come, almost always, from within.

For the whole idea of an official government-in-waiting is unworkable, astonishingly recent, and silly.

It's mostly the fault of Ted Heath and Clem Attlee. Attlee was the first Opposition leader to allocate Shadow Cabinet responsibilities to members of his front bench. Heath took this to extremes when he became Leader of

the Opposition in 1965, announcing a 70-strong team of Shadow ministers ready to march up Whitehall if Harold Wilson lost the 1966 election. Since then, it has been *de rigueur* for every Opposition leader to award Shadow jobs to a mix of tired former ministers and cronies.

Until the late 19th century the very idea of loyal Opposition was an uncertain one, and even in the 20th century an effective Opposition has been the exception, not the norm. In January 1931, *The Times* noted that the Shadow Cabinet had not sat for 18 months. Soon after, the National Government and then the wartime coalition meant there were hardly any Opposition MPs at all. In 1945, Winston Churchill reluctantly established a Tory Shadow Cabinet, with

fornightly dinners at the Savoy, noted mainly for social gossip. He didn't expect Opposition to make an impact. Only an election would do that.

Official Opposition as we now know it is a new idea. I believe Tony Blair is disposed to kill it off, though he may not yet recognise his own intentions. As I noted after PM's Questions this week, Mr Blair — a year into government, enjoying fair winds and surely beginning to forget the old Tory challenge — returns to kick at the twitching corpse of the Conservative Party with an obsessive and destructive passion which belies his otherwise Christian charm. "Inclusive" this is not. Yet he is happy to include Tories outside the parliamentary Shadow Cabinet fold — David Mellor, Michael Heseltine and now Chris Patten — in his administration's Big Tent.

Margaret Thatcher was vicious too, but through it all shone a respect for the parliamentary process. She wanted to beat the Opposition, but she did not wish to destroy official Opposition itself. Blair instinctively does. She saw the other side of the House as the opposing team in a necessary game. He sees it as a sort of cancer, to be cut out. Why? The expunging of Opposition

works for this Prime Minister on different levels. On the subliminal level the spectre of the Tory party like Banquo's ghost, reminds him of the inheritance he has usurped. Mr Blair is a reactionary with Bluffy extras. If his moral conservatism has inclined him to constitutional reform that is because — in Giuseppe di Lampedusa's words — "if you want things to stay the same, things are going to have to change".

There is no place in his personal world view, for "official" opposition: a status which expects a tribute of the people to make an effort to find fault with and thwart a good man like himself. But he would have no emotional objection to friendly differences of view within an assembly broadly committed to the success of a national administration. Here, too, I suspect, he is quite in tune with the electorate.

I am not suggesting that Tony Blair plans to organise a one-party state. I am suggesting that his instincts are to move our democracy away from the nurture of "shadow" governments — a bi-polar world of Punch & Judy, throw-the-buggers-out — and towards a political establishment offering more organic change: groupings and regroupings of men and ideas; constantly shifting focuses of power and influence; coalition; compromise; consensus. Under the surface, American politics are more like this. Continental constitutions encourage it. We are the odd ones out.

Neither advocate nor disparage: I simply predict. This project, like most human projects, remains likely to be blown on to the rocks by nature's own Opposition: events. But if Mr Blair is lucky, then I believe Mr Hague, or perhaps Mr Portillo, may lead Britain's last official Opposition. If Mr Hague's leadership is not looking good, we are wrong to blame Mr Hague. His party is unleadable not least because it cannot find itself, find its own sense of identity, in an ethos which does not invite official Opposition in the way that Margaret Thatcher's "cmon-if-ye-hard-enough" did.

In the recesses of his imagination Tony Blair has a dream. He sees workmen ripping out the opposing benches of the Commons Chamber, and rearranging the seats in a circle. Maybe we could end general elections, too, and elect a tranche of MPs every year? I no longer rule these wild fantasies out.

Matthew Parris

Wright's flight from PR

John Lloyd on a rebel in the ranks of electoral reformers

The country — the political country — used to stand for something; or not, as the case may be. "The country won't stand for it" became a mocked, blimpish phrase, but it expressed a kind of irreducible essence of the British view, a deep but strongly flowing river of common sense.

But as reactions to the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, made clear, the issues which were once widely held to be fundamental can no longer be considered the pillars of public life. The touchstones of patriotism and allegiance, and the determinism and protections of class, all melted or are melting. So when a new Labour invokes "the country", we should reach for our ear trumpets and magnifying glasses. What's the fellow saying?

"If the 1997 general election had been run under the additional member system [of proportional representation] preferred by most reformers, Labour would not have won a majority, whereas if it had been run under the alternative vote that is emerging as the default option, then Labour's majority would have been more disproportionate than it was. Did the country really want either of those outcomes?"

Thus Tony Wright, MP, parliamentary private secretary to Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, and one of the most cerebral of the Labourites. In the current issue of *Prospect*, he places his long-held view that electoral reform for Westminster is a *sine qua non* of new Labourism on the dissecting table. He concludes that perhaps the would-be reformers are wrong. "All I am arguing is that the question must be asked."

For two decades, the assumption of the reformers was that the governing class of any stripe would never reform the centralised British state which served their interests so well. Yet, says Mr Wright, here they are, changing it. "Freedom of information, the European convention on human rights, devolved governments in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast, an elected mayor for London and possibly everywhere, the prospect of a reformed second chamber: put all this together and a different kind of political system begins to emerge."

Having set in train decentralisation and pluralism by other means, what need is there for proportional representation of the supreme legislature? "It is possible," says Mr Wright, "to have too much pluralism as well as too little... to throw out the baby of effective government with the bath water of unconstitutional power." Only one year in power, and already the most ardent reformer is saying "enough" — the forces of chaos are at the gates!

In fact, they are already inside. Lord Jenkins of Hillhead is an unlikely force of chaos, but unlike Tony Wright he is not about to rethink his steady advocacy of electoral reform. He chairs the commission on electoral reform, set up last December and charged to recommend an alternative to first past the post. It must have in mind the "need for stable government" and "the requirement for broad proportionality". The common view is that PR is the price of Liberal co-operation with Labour, and if a certain amount of stability is the casualty, so be it.

The Prime Minister is not yet convinced. "I remain unpersuaded," he wrote 18 months ago. "It is not... a simple question of moving from an 'unfair' to a 'fair' voting system. An electoral system... needs to reflect opinion, but it must also aggregate opinion... particularly important for a Parliament whose job is to create and sustain a single, mainstream government."

In this, one can see one of the central contradictions of the Blair Government. He does see Parliament's job as to sustain "a single mainstream government"; yet he does also want to reshape the political ground so that his party, with Liberal support, holds the Left and occupies the Centre. He thinks the British 20th century has been largely conservative because progressivism split at its inception: he wishes to sew them together again at the end.

Electoral reform thus carries a double charge. It gives the Liberal a party advantage; and it produces a result which, by probably denying any party an absolute majority of national votes cast, forces co-operation. If Tony Blair wants to reshape the political structure for the 21st century, he has to allow many, not just the "main" streams into government.

This means acceptance that "the country" no longer has a steady view. New Labour's most constant task — it is the task of every government from now on, and not just in Britain — is to assemble and reassemble the fragments of a nation which has no irreducible essence — whether in church, or monarch, or class, or destiny. To many of these essences I would say, good riddance. And to our first past the post system, too. Stability, if it is to be found, now comes only from transparency. If that does not always produce the outcome we want, it is still the only one we can now live with.

The author is associate editor of the *New Statesman*.

Holy order

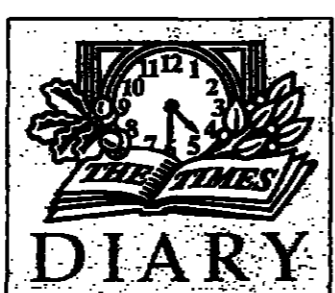
A CHURCH of England bishop with a reputation for enjoying the high life will use a British Army helicopter to ensure that he can meet the Queen before flying 130 miles to a speaking engagement. The trip by the Bishop of Salisbury, the Right Rev David Stancliffe, will engage more humble men of the cloth, already hot under the dog collar about the public perception of growing extravagance in the Church's top hierarchy. Stancliffe, who, like a character out of Anthony Trollope, strides around Salisbury in breeches, is due to accompany the Queen during her visit next Friday to Sherborne Abbey, Dorset. He then wants to speak to trainee priests at a theological college in North London and the Army is providing the kind of transport more commonly used by the Royal Family and government ministers. The Gazette helicopter will, say the Ministry of Defence, not cost the taxpayer a penny.



Flying bishop: Stancliffe

Stancliffe enjoys good living. The bishop, who has been accused of "fat catechism", last year ordered his chauffeur to drive up to London to pick him up after a banquet at the Royal Academy and then take him back to Salisbury. Stancliffe also owns a house in Italy. His audience next Friday is unlikely to be impressed: annual stipends in the clergy barely top £14,000 while the Church's budget for bishops has risen from £4.9 million to more than £10 million in a decade. A spokesman for the bishop said: "He wouldn't be able to get from one appointment to the other without the helicopter." So much for the meek being blessed.

TO St Pauls in Covent Garden for yesterday's memorial service for John Wells, attended by the Prince of Wales, Barry Humphries and Lord Snowden. As we remembered the great wit's wit, Jerry Hall with a screaming child in tow burst into the service late: she excused her



tardiness by explaining that at first she had turned up at St Paul's Cathedral instead.

Bad break

IS LEMBIT OPIK in danger of missing his date with destiny? The young, dashing Liberal Democrat MP, tipped by some as the party's future leader, is expected to be in hospital for three months recovering from a fractured vertebra after a paragliding accident. Opik's fall means that he is out of action just as things might be getting exciting in the Lib Dem party. Under its constitution, Paddy Ashdown must submit himself for re-election one year after a general election. Grumblings in the party about the leader's cosy relationship with Tony Blair might encourage Charles Kennedy and Nick Har-

vey to make a bid for Ashdown's mantle. I hope Opik gets well soon.

BILL CLINTON has asked for permission to use an extract from Richard Carlson's book about dealing with stress called *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff*. The section he asked to be reproduced: "Accept the Fact that Life is Unfair".

Sleep alarm

MARIA ELENA, the widow of Buddy Holly, has disclosed that the rock'n'roll star had a premon-



Holly: That'll be the day that I die...

tion of his death in an aeroplane crash the night before he died. Interviewed on the 40th anniversary of the singer's British tour, she said: "Buddy was dreaming that his brother Larry had come to pick up in his light plane. Larry wanted to leave me behind but Buddy insisted. 'Wherever I go, Maria Elena comes too'. Larry decided to drop me off on a high building — all Buddy could remember was me waving him goodbye. At the time I didn't see the significance of the dreams. I wasn't paying attention."

RAYMOND BLANC has disclosed that the first meal he ate on arrival in Britain in the Seventies was fish and chips. "The fish was grey and the chips were like cardboard," says the proprietor of *Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons*, the Oxfordshire establishment which has done more than most restaurants to improve food in this country. "There was just no zest for food. It was as if no one cared." It is a wonder the French chef did not return home immediately.

Picture perfect

FROM panting to painting. Waheed Ali and Charlie Parson, the inventors of "after six pints and a curry television", are moving into



Planet export: de Cadenet

Richard and Judy territory. Planet 24, their television company, creator of *The Big Breakfast* and *The Word* which launched Amanda de Cadenet, is making *Watercolour Challenge*. The programme involves contestants racing against the clock to paint the prettiest picture and will be broadcast on Channel 4 this summer. Will viewers want to watch paint dry?

EDWARD WELSH

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صحة من الاجل



PLAYING TO THE MOB

Political signals spurred the hunt for Mary Bell

Jack Straw is concerned that Home Office officials have known for two years about the co-operation of Mary Bell in the book by Gitta Sereny which we are serialising this week...

Repercussions of Mary Bell book

From Mr Robert Gordon-Blacker Sir, I read your article yesterday, "Bell, book and the newspapers"...

Mixed feelings at Israel anniversary

From Mr A. M. Levy Sir, Israel is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. It has survived and prospered against all odds and much, I fear, to the disappointment of many...

Calls for MCC to play a straight bat

From Mr R. C. Doegar Sir, The reaction of Mr Tony Banks, the Sports Minister (report, April 24), was not an "intemperate attack on the integrity of the present MCC Committee"...

MIDNIGHT THUNDER

The IRA cannot avoid decommissioning weapons

Every home in Northern Ireland has been sent a copy of the Good Friday agreement with a cover showing a perfect sunset. Now a thunderclap has broken in what the Government hoped might be a clear sky...

Iraq's plight

From Mr Gabriel Carlyle Sir, Dr el-Ghorney highlights the disastrous costs of the Iraqi Government's militarism (letter, April 27)...

Submarine exploits

From Commodore B. S. Morgan, RN Sir, I was fascinated to read the extraordinary story of Stoker First Class John Capes, who wriggled through an aft hatch and surfaced from 170ft while his submarine, HMS Perseus, lay crippled on the seabed off Cephalonia in 1941...

Bobbies on the beat

From Sir Paul Condon, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis Sir, Contrary to the headline of your report today, "Condon predicts end of bobbies on the beat", I would like to reassure Londoners that the bobby on the beat is here to stay...

London's mayor

From Mrs Giles Playfair Sir, As a once-upon-a-time New Yorker, may I caution fellow Londoners before they vote in a Mayor?

CLEAN SPORT

Drug tests and proper penalties are the way to beat the cheats

Drugs are the antithesis of sport. They could be the death of it. The Michelle Smith (de Bruin) fiasco is only the latest in the mounting series of cases of alleged drug-taking by an athlete that promise to be sensational, long-drawn-out, expensive and ultimately indecisive...

Monsters in the home

From Dr B. V. Ridout Sir, Research on death-watch beetles ("The monster from inner space", April 22) was initiated and led by English Heritage (with myself as co-ordinator), not by Kew as your article states...

Polluted beaches

From Mr R. Smythe Sir, Surely the chairman of the North West Tourist Board, commenting on the polluted state of Britain's beaches (report, April 27), should direct his exasperation about the distress caused to holidaymakers and the reduction in tourism to the bodies responsible, and not to the consequent reporting of the facts in the Reader's Digest Good Beach Guide 1998...

Unsought honour

From Mr Tony Wilmont Sir, Since you published my letter (April 7) about the Martini cocktail, I've received an unsolicited offer to reproduce [it] digitally and present it mounted and framed...

Business letters, page 33

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number - 0171-782 5046.

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سكز من الاجل

OBITUARIES

IAN TRELAWNY

Ian Trelawny, OBE, DSC and Bar, former Chief Executive Director of the Felixstowe Dock and Railway Company, died in Ipswich on April 22 aged 81. He was born on January 17, 1917.



Today Felixstowe dock is Britain's most successful container port, employing more than 2,000 people directly and providing work for several thousands more in ancillary industries. But when Ian Trelawny joined it as manager in 1955 the picture was very different. The Felixstowe dock employed just nine people. In the wake of the East Coast flood disaster of 1953, the basin was silted and near-derelict. Behind the dock was desolate marshland which flooded at high water. The inundation of 1953 had ruined the old wooden piers and undermined buildings and railway tracks.

"It was a scene of utter desolation," Trelawny recalled. "The town of Felixstowe, too, was dying."

Over the next 17 years Trelawny oversaw the development of Felixstowe, pioneering new methods of cargo handling and introducing containerisation in the 1960s, unrestrained by the National Dock Labour Scheme, which imposed restrictive practices on ports elsewhere. In the process Felixstowe was transformed from a sleepy dormitory to a bustling port town, with the creation of thousands of dock-related jobs boosting its economy out of all recognition.

This was accomplished after an adventurous war career during which Trelawny served in Coastal Forces, duelling in MTBs with E-boats and German flak ships from his base at Felixstowe.

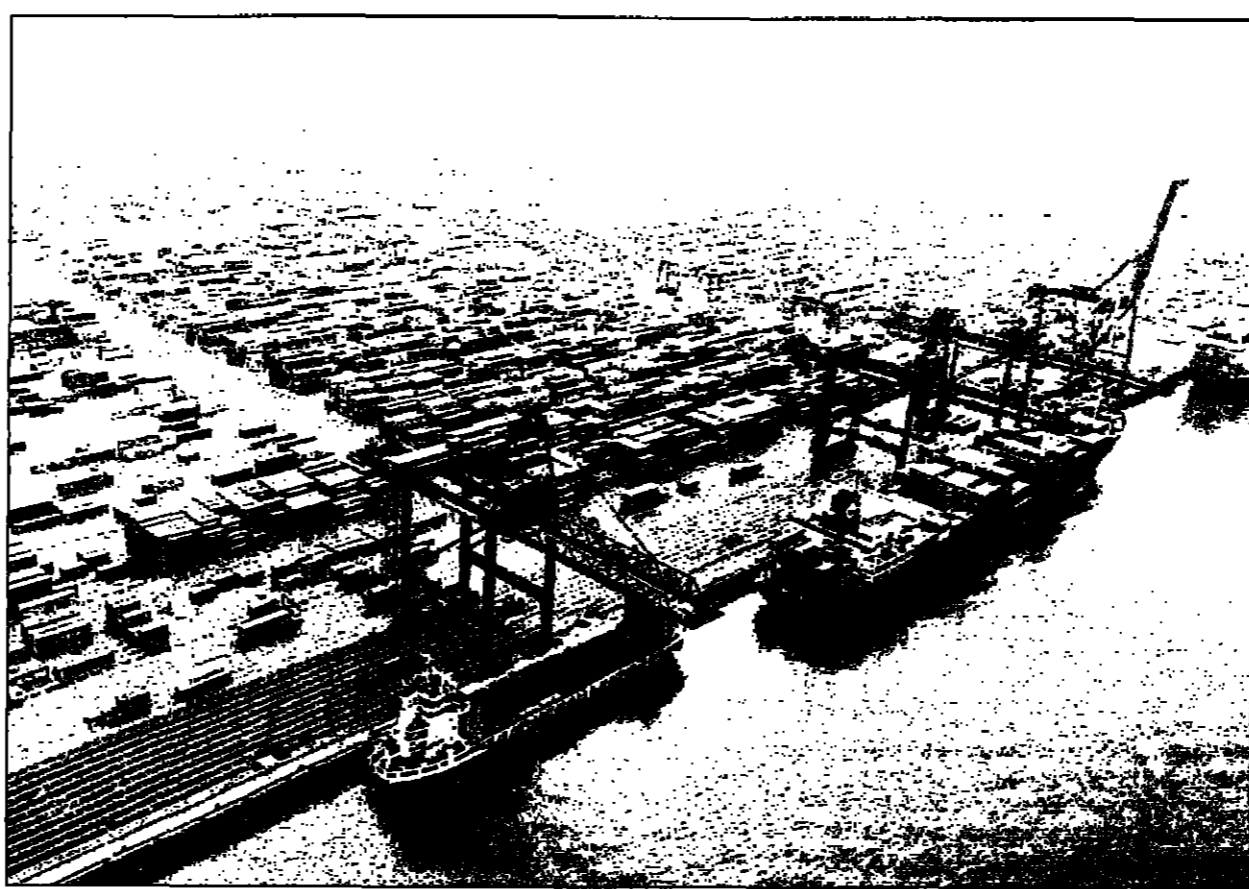
Of Cornish family — his father was a Royal Navy captain — Ian Trelawny was nevertheless born in Edinburgh, but educated at St Erbyn's School, Penzance, and King's College, Taunton. After leaving school he worked briefly as a clerk in cold storage, but soon found this ungenial and in 1938 he started a boatbuilding and yacht-broking business in London. But war soon interrupted this and he joined the Royal Navy as a rating,

serving first in minesweepers and later in an armed merchant cruiser.

But the buccannery action in coastal forces was to be his métier. Soon commissioned, he was posted to Felixstowe, from where the MTBs of Coastal Forces made nightly forays against the flak ships which pounded away at the raids of Bomber Command and the E-boats which sought to wreak havoc on British coastal shipping.

With their armament of only two 0.5 inch machineguns, the MTBs were in fact no match for the 20mm and 37mm cannon of the E-boats, and their petrol engines were much more likely to blow up than the German MAN diesels if they sustained a direct hit. However, thanks to a canny bit of private enterprise, the Felixstowe boats were soon able to go to war with twin 20mm Oerlikons. The mountings for these were designed by the base's gunnery officer and manufactured privately by an Ipswich firm and paid for with the profits from the mess bar.

Promoted to lieutenant-commander, Trelawny became senior officer MTBs in Nore Command and was awarded the



Ian Trelawny and the two kilometre-long Trinity container terminal at Felixstowe docks

DSC and Bar for the 108 sorties he made in the narrow seas. During the Allied invasion of Normandy he was involved with salvage and was subsequently responsible for organising the reopening of several ports from Normandy to the Baltic. He continued in the Navy for several years after the war, at one time commanding a salvage vessel in Hong Kong harbour.

This background was ideal when he joined Felixstowe Dock and Railway Company in 1955. The only trade going in and out of the dock was coal and grain,

the latter being the reason it had originally been bought by an agricultural merchant, Gordon Parker, in 1951. Among the catalogue of reasons why Felixstowe was apparently not ripe for development was one that turned out to be an advantage: it was outside the National Dock Labour Scheme introduced by the postwar Labour Government with eventually ruinous consequences for Britain's ports. When the scheme was introduced in 1948, with its restrictive practices and promise of jobs for life for dockers, the virtually redundant Felixstowe docks had

been ignored. By the time the scheme was abolished in 1968, Felixstowe had built up an unassailable lead over its competitors. And today one of the port's terminals, Trinity, has the longest continuous quay-side in the British Isles at 2,084 metres. (Its name reflects the gradual expansion of Felixstowe on to land leased — to that institution's great profit — from Trinity College, Cambridge.)

But there were enormous obstacles along the way. Not least were the city fathers of Felixstowe, who saw their town purely as a dormitory for Ipswich and

tried to buy the dock through compulsory purchase for use as a dump for household refuse. Meanwhile Harwich and Ipswich councils opposed the dock company's Parliamentary Bills as a waste of time. Experts said the harbour approaches could never be made deep enough; that the company would never get enough labour; that no shipping line would ever run regular services to "such a piddling little place".

Trelawny battled through all these difficulties, though he often scarcely knew at each week's end where he was going to find the money to pay his men's wages. As far as potential customers were concerned, the trick was to get them to undertake to use the port without their actually seeing it. "We had nothing to show and nothing we wanted people to see," he recalled "we didn't want them to find out after heavy rain that there was as much muddy water onshore as there was in the dock."

He organised his small labour force to make hardcore for roads and foundations from beach shingle; the men made their own pallets and the dock, Trelawny always claimed, was the first in Britain to use forklift trucks, the originals of which, too, were home-made. With these improvements, the science of cargo handling at Felixstowe made great strides, culminating in containerisation. Felixstowe's position, far from being a backwater, was seen to be highly advantageous, since transoceanic container ships making a round of North Sea terminals needed to make only a small deviation to call there. Trelawny was appointed OBE in 1967.

In 1972 he moved over from management to head the consultancy side of the company's business, travelling the world to improve port facilities, which might be anything from remote jungle wharves far up inland waterways, to large-scale developments. He finally retired in 1987 to Shingle Street, a Suffolk hamlet from where he could see giant container ships and roll-on-roll-off ferries on their way to and from the Felixstowe terminals.

He is survived by his wife June, whom he met as a Wren at Felixstowe, and by their son and three daughters.

THE REV PROFESSOR R. N. WHYBRAY

The Rev Professor R. N. Whybray, Old Testament scholar, died on April 15 aged 74. He was born on July 26, 1923.



NORMAN WHYBRAY was a prolific Old Testament scholar whose methodical work was characterised by freshness and common sense — a rare combination of qualities in his particular discipline. He became widely known in academic circles in 1965, when he took up a lectureship in the theology department at Hull University and published his first major work in English, *Wisdom in Proverbs*.

Roger Norman Whybray's early career was conventional enough: from Kingston Grammar School he went up to Keble College, Oxford, during the war to read French (in which he remained fluent) and theology. Ordination training at Lincoln Theological College followed in 1944-45, after which he served briefly as a curate in Basingstoke and taught successively at the General Theological Seminary in New York and at Queen's College in Birmingham.

In 1962, however, he was appointed Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew at

Central Theological College, Tokyo, an unusual "missionary" posting which he held until 1965. He mastered Japanese to the extent of lecturing on and teaching Biblical Hebrew in that language, as well as publishing a book and several articles in Japanese. During this period he returned for two years, 1960-62, to Oxford as a Kennicott Fellow to study for a DPhil. His research then shaped

much of his later career, as it led to his enduring interest in the "Wisdom literature" of the Old Testament (principally Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes), on which he became an internationally acknowledged expert.

In his years at Hull he progressed steadily in terms of career (reader in 1969, professor in 1978) and scholarly recognition. From 1974 to 1980 he was editor of the Society for Old Testament Studies' annual *Book List*, and it was fitting that he was elected president of the society for his last year there, 1982, when he was also awarded the degree of Doctor of Divinity by Oxford.

Several books developed his interests in the Wisdom tradition. Perhaps his finest work, *The Intellectual Tradition of the Old Testament*, appeared in 1974. By careful concordance work and attention to the limits of the available evidence, he resolutely resisted the fashion which sought the social milieu of this literature exclusively in the circles of the royal court, arguing instead for a wider background among the landed intelligentsia with their international connections. These years also saw him publish

more than once on the other chief focus of his research, the second half of the Book of Isaiah.

Under the pressure of cuts in funding for higher education and the consequent retrenchment in most universities, Whybray took early retirement in 1982. He moved to Ely, mainly in order to be near to the library facilities of Cambridge and to enjoy the collegiality of the regular senior Old Testament seminar there. From his elegantly furnished study on the open landing, lined with his fine specialist library, a torrent of books and articles began to flow.

For recreation, he turned to his piano and harpsichord and devoured detective novels. With Mary, his second wife, his home became a haven of hospitality for friends, colleagues and not a few overseas scholars.

Two events towards the end of his life brought particular pleasure to Whybray. Almost from its inception he had been honoured by the award of the British Academy's Burket Medal for Biblical Studies. Whybray's life was not untouched by personal tragedy. In 1978 his first wife, Helene, died of cancer after a prolonged illness, and in 1990 he was to lose his adopted son Peter, also to cancer. But with Mary, an old friend whom he married in 1979, and in the remarkable careers of whose two daughters he took both interest and pride, he found renewed joy. All three survive him.

KATE BOSSE-GRIFFITHS

Kate Bosse-Griffiths, Egyptologist, died on April 4 aged 87. She was born in Wittenberg on July 16, 1910.



BEGINNING her career as an Egyptologist in Germany, Kate Bosse-Griffiths came to Britain in the 1930s, married a Welshman, learnt Welsh and became a novelist and short story writer in her adoptive language, besides continuing with her archaeological work.

Born Käthe Bosse, she studied at the University of Munich where she read classics and Egyptology. She was briefly employed on the staff of the Berlin State Museums, but was dismissed when it was discovered that she was half-Jewish. (Her mother was imprisoned in the notorious women's concentration camp at Ravensbrück and died there.) In 1936 Kate emigrated to Britain.

While on the staff of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, she met John Gwyn Griffiths, whom she married in 1939. This remarkable Welshman spread his academic interests over both classical and Egyptological research, and the two became an inseparable scholarly team. They set up house in Wales. Kate learnt Welsh, which became the language of their home, and quickly made her mark in the cultural life of the Principality. She published two novels and two books of short stories in her adopted language.

The appointment of her husband after the war to the classics department at what was then University College, Swansea, had a major effect on Kate Bosse-Griffiths's life, enabling her to resume her Egyptological work, and she became curator at the Royal Institution of South Wales, now Swansea Museum.

The institution had a long interest in Egyptology, being the recipient of Egyptian antiquities collected by Francis Wallace Grenfell, 1st Baron Kivley (1841-1925), with the assistance of the renowned Egyptologist E. A. Wallis Budge. She began the study of

the museum's collections with enthusiasm, her catholic archaeological interests being well displayed in her booklet *Twenty Thousand Years of Local History* (1967).

She was universally admired for her sheer determination not to yield to adverse pressures, and an unfailing commitment to do her best for any inquirer who showed an interest in the collections. She was known affectionately throughout the Swansea area simply as "Dr Kate".

Her career received a great boost in 1971 with the acquisition by the university of a substantial proportion of the archaeological collection of the pharmaceutical millionaire Sir Henry Wellcome. She became the honorary curator of the collection of some 3,000 items. Its cataloguing, study and display occupied much of the rest of her life.

In 1976 a small museum was opened in two rooms which made available to the public some of the most important pieces, though a great deal of valuable material remained in store. Kate was also able to supplement the collection from other sources, including the acquisition of the fine Twenty-first Dynasty coffin of Iusemhesmet from Exeter Museum. Stimulated by the challenge

of these developments, she produced three bilingual handbooks to categories of objects in the collection: *Beadwork* (1978); *A Musician Meets her Gods* (1982) a book on the coffin of Iusemhesmet; and *Five Ways of Writing between 3000 BC and AD 200* (1994). She also wrote for learned journals.

Kate Bosse-Griffiths put the Swansea Wellcome Collection on the international map, performing a major service to Egyptology. By 1995 she had retired as honorary curator but, as part of the celebrations for the 75th anniversary of the founding of University of Wales, Swansea, it was decided to construct a purpose-built base for the museum. With large grants from the European Regional Development Fund and the National Heritage Lottery Fund, the new Egypt Centre is now complete, and work is well advanced on installing the antiquities in preparation for the formal opening in September. In recognition of her role in the history of the Swansea Wellcome Collection, the upper gallery of the museum is to be called after her.

Kate Bosse-Griffiths is survived by her husband and two sons.

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request to care for a four and a
half year old English child...

FARESAVERS
MALAGA 079 GREECE 0199
ALCAZITE 079 TURKEY 0128
FARO 079 ISRAEL 0129

AIRLINK Worldwide
0171 713 7770

THE TIMES
OPENING TIMES/DEADLINES FOR
BIRTH, MARRIAGE & DEATH NOTICES
OVER THE EASTER PERIOD

FLIGHTWISE
MALAGA 079 GREECE 0199
ALCAZITE 079 TURKEY 0128
FARO 079 ISRAEL 0129

JETLINE
0171 360 1111

LEGAL PUBLIC COMPANY &
PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES
TO PLACE NOTICES FOR YEARS
SECTION
0171 782 7344

DRURY LANE THEATRE
"OKLAHOMA"
BASED ON THE PLAY "GREEN GROW THE LILACS"
BY LYNN RIGGS; MUSIC BY RICHARD RODGERS

ON THIS DAY
May 1, 1947
It is quite true — as we had been most
persistently and skillfully led to expect —
that this musical comedy has some
things to teach the English light stage.

DRURY LANE THEATRE
"OKLAHOMA"
The show makes no pretensions to wit.
It tells a simple, hearty little tale of a
good cowboy and a bad cowboy in love

ON THIS DAY
May 1, 1947
It is difficult to recall the effect Oklahoma had
when it arrived on the London stage. The
pace, the speed and precision of the
ensemble scenes, and above all the enchanting
songs, drew enthusiastic audiences so that
the show ran for 1,500 performances.

ON THIS DAY
May 1, 1947
The singing is resonant and hearty.
Mr. Howard Keel, Miss Betty Jane
Watson, and Mr. Wm. J. McCarthy are
the principals, and they are supported by
ringing choruses. The dresses are deli-
cious and the dancing exhilarating in its
vigour and exaction. The humorous
diversions reveal Mr. Marek Windheim,
Miss Dorothea MacFarland and Miss
Mary Marlo as likeable comedians.
Indeed, it would be almost literally true
to say that there is never a dull moment.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including 'S his end anc', 'NCE', 'speech, comin...', 'the National...', 'to the fran...', 'scribed as...', 'our nation...', 'which is bei...', 'Front leader...', 'the euro, let u...', 'to the fran...', 'let us mobilis...', 'the European...', 'let's Front leader...', 'from running...', 'is the election...', 'ver get a conviction', 'upheld', 'logical', 'creat', 'on the', 'aning', 'casier', 'World', 'ide against', 'an media', 'ING', 'E.', '★ MOSTLY IS FREE', '★ AS EY'VE E. E.!', '★ V S THEIR I...', '★ 220', '★ TRY', 'store for details, here for details.'

NEWS

Home Office knew of Bell book

A government inquiry was under way last night after Jack Straw disclosed that Home Office officials knew two years ago that Mary Bell was assisting in a book about her life.

IRA rules out disarmament

The IRA enraged Unionists by ruling out disarmament yesterday, but opened the way for Sinn Fein to endorse the peace agreement.

Dounreay fall-out

Margaret Beckett tried repeatedly to block the controversial deal to receive nuclear shipments from Georgia at Dounreay, it emerged last night.

Priest jailed

The Roman Catholic Church last night apologised to the victims of a 78-year-old priest jailed yesterday for seven years for abusing boys at an orphanage.

Royal purse opened

Royal finances were opened to public scrutiny after Parliament's spending watchdog was given access to the £40 million Royal Household accounts.

On-screen rivalry

Viewers will be bombarded this summer with sport as the BBC and ITV intensify their rivalry in the busiest year ever for international events.

Teachers taught

A handbook on how to teach grammar is being sent to every secondary school after English teachers admitted they did not know how to prepare pupils for national tests.

£4m phone call

A former Royal Navy engineer, who launched an air and sea rescue costing £250,000 with a hoax phone call while drunk, escaped a jail sentence.

Satchel sneaks bug Tokyo pupils

When Japanese children ask their parents to stop bugging them, they mean it. For pupils are discovering tiny transmitters in their satchels, or concealed in lucky charms, which allow mothers to eavesdrop on their conversations.

Degas cover-up

A British psychiatrist says one of Degas's most revealing portraits was not exhibited in his lifetime because it so accurately portrayed tensions in his family.

Rome Zoo scandal

Animals have had to be destroyed and others sent to European zoos — including John Aspinall's Port Lympne Wild Life Park — after experts brought in to Rome Zoo found "a legacy of scandalous neglect".

Euro's dawning

Tomorrow's send-off for the euro will be painted by EU leaders as the dawn of a new age, but rhetoric will not mask anxiety over one of the biggest gambles by a group of sovereign states.

May Day go-slow

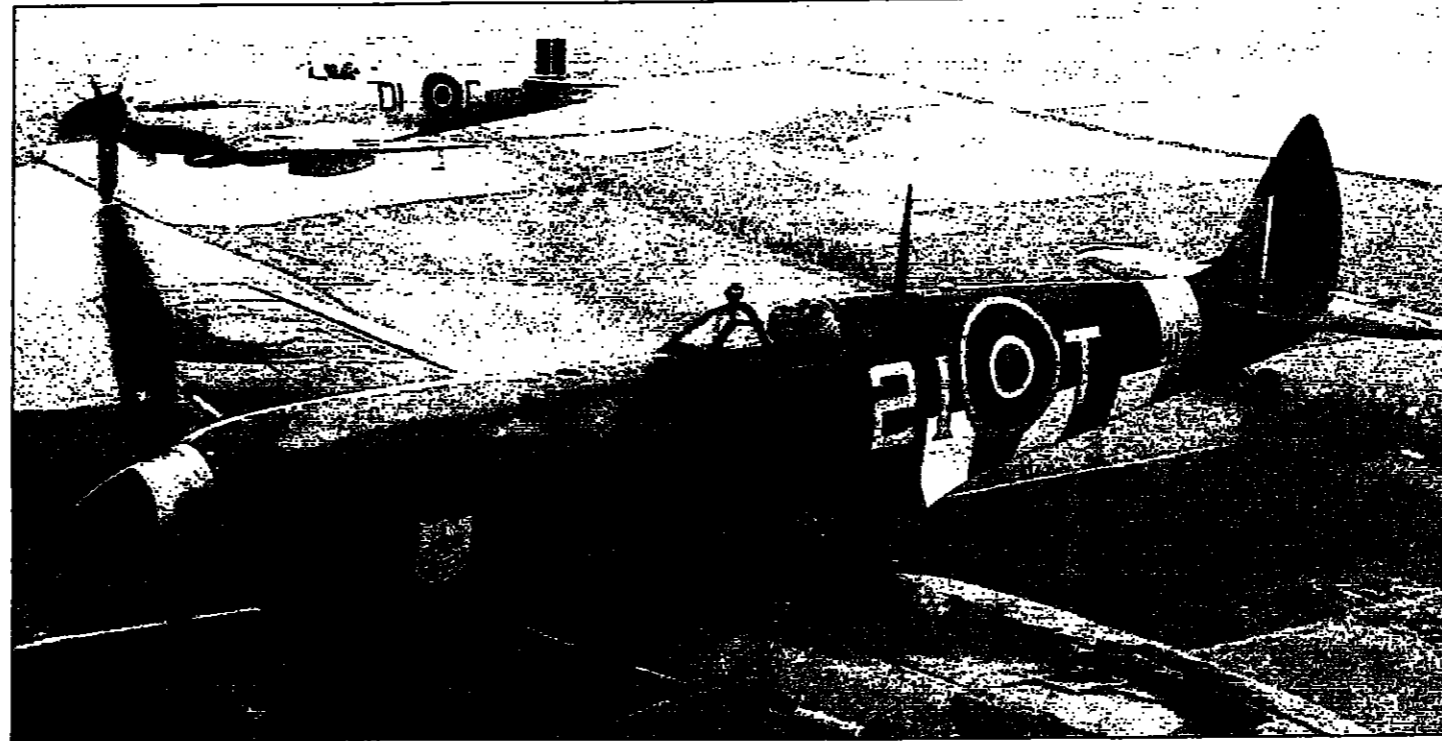
Chinese Communists will celebrate May Day with some embarrassment. Millions of workers have been laid off and millions more face unemployment.

Lewinsky loses

Monica Lewinsky has lost her battle to win immunity from prosecution and may be forced to give evidence about her relationship with President Clinton.

Celebration muted

As a divided Israel celebrated its 50th anniversary, Benjamin Netanyahu denounced those who had used the occasion to criticise Israeli society.



A Spitfire IX, foreground, and a Spitfire V over Cambridgeshire yesterday en route to the Duxford Air Show over the weekend

BUSINESS

EMI bid: Shares in EMI rose sharply after the record company received a bid approach.

Firms fined: Royal Bank of Scotland and General Accident have been fined by a City regulator for their part as trustees to the mutual funds of Peter Young.

BAe deal: British Aerospace is paying £269 million for a 35 per cent stake in Saab, the Swedish aerospace and defence group.

Markets: The FTSE 100 rose 95.2 to 5928.3. On the foreign exchange sterling rose 18 cents to £1.6726 and 45 pfennig to DM3.0016.

SPORT

Football: Alan Shearer is expected to face disciplinary action from the FA after being caught on camera kicking Neil Lennon, of Leicester City, in the face.

Swimming: The head of the International Olympic Committee's medical commission said whiskey in a urine sample provided by Michelle Smith was strong enough to have killed her.

Cricket: Michael Atherton and Sachin Tendulkar will captain the teams in the Diana, Princess of Wales memorial match at Lord's between MCC and a Rest of the World XI.

Snooker: Ken Doherty led Mark Williams 6-2 after the first session of their world championship semi-final.

ARTS

Soap odds: "Of course in Britain we never confuse soap fantasy with real life" — Richard Morrison on Australia's plan to use soap operas for propaganda.

Pop 1: Caitlin Moran on Stephen Duffy, who dropped out of the Eighties after a spell with Duran Duran but has reinvented himself with a new album.

Pop 2: David Sinclair reviews Tori Amos and the rest of the new album releases, and talks to Nick Cave, the legendary god of hellfire and now loving parent.

Primitivist suspect: Lynda La Plante was so appalled by what she found on the Internet that she has written a new television serial based in cyberspace.

FEATURES

Cries Unheard: In the third extract from her book, Cries Unheard, Gitta Sereny describes the horrendous consequences of Mary Bell's release into a world for which she was not ready.

Let's shop: Shivering up the King's Road in a brisk north-easterly, it is hard to believe summer has arrived. Jane Shilling tries to get in the spring-shopping mood.

Thought and reality: An edited extract from The Times Lecture given on the real nature of things by Lord Saatchi.

Hot gossip: Three years ago Talk Radio was on the brink of closure, now it is breaking records. Ray Snoddy reports.

EDUCATION

Where's teacher? Schools are having trouble finding suitable teachers.

THE PAPERS

From one "revolution" to another. Thirty years ago it took place in the streets. Today it is the euro. Despite the obvious differences the revolution of May 1998 is descended from the revolt of May 1968.

THE LOTTERY

The winning numbers were 40,15,36,28,34,12. The bonus was 1



TOMORROW

IN THE SATURDAY TIMES

CARTE BLANCHE Oscar winner Frances McDormand switches from Fargo to play Blanche in A Streetcar named Desire

WIN A MINI Your chance to drive off in a Mini-Cooper

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,780

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-28 and clues for across and down.

- ACROSS 1 Intended I should go in for run in the country (6). 2 Confused roarings in place full of soldiers (8). 10 Hope destroyed, distress disoriented this tragic figure (7). 11 Hard copper retired, rejected as corrupt (7). 12 Like letters I put in early post, perhaps (10). 13 Join to appear sound (4). 15 Early, possibly Arab, book brought back (7). 17 Look to include junior officer in joint summit (7). 19 Make very short note for monastic head (7). 21 Some bought it, an iceberg doing for this (7). 23 Plays, using two eyes alternately (4). 24 Behave responsibly and start to play the wise man (3,4,3).

Word search puzzle with letters and words to find.

INFORMATION

Latest Road and Weather conditions UK Weather - All regions 0236 466 9110

Weather by Fax 0236 466 9110

World City Weather 153 destinations world wide

Motoring 0236 466 9110

Car reports by fax 0236 466 9110

HIGHEST & LOWEST

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING

Advertisement for 'Watch it pour' Ale featuring a cat and a bottle of ale.

FORECAST

General: eastern coasts of Scotland will start cloudy with drizzle but it will become dry with some sunshine inland later.

Channel Isles: dull with a little drizzle and fog patches. Moderate to north or northeast wind. Max 12 (54F)

SW England, S Wales, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, N Ireland: dry with sunny spells. Moderate northerly wind. Max 15 (59F)

SE England, E Anglia, E Midlands, E England, NE England: misty with drizzly rain. Fog over hills and towards coasts. Moderate to fresh northerly wind. Max 13 (55F)

Central S England, W Midlands, on east and southeast coasts of England: drizzle to begin, but becoming drier

Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Argyll, NW Scotland: dry with sunny spells. Light north to northwest wind. Max 15 (59F)

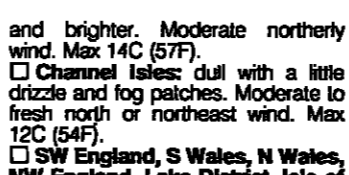
Irish Republic: dry with occasional sun. Wind north moderate, occasionally fresh. Max 13 (55F)

Outlook: cloudy with some drizzle on east and southeast coasts of England, elsewhere dry with sunny spells.

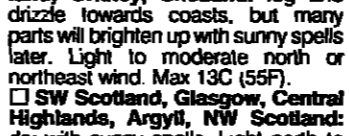
AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

Table showing weather conditions around Britain yesterday, including temperature, wind, and cloud cover for various locations.

NOON TODAY



Changes to chart below from noon. Low D will push N and fill; low E will edge slowly N with little pressure change; high A will be slowmoving with little pressure change



HIGH TIDES

Table showing high tide times for various locations.

HOURS OF DARKNESS

Table showing hours of darkness for various locations.

ABROAD

Table showing weather conditions abroad for various countries.

Table showing weather conditions abroad for various countries.

Table showing weather conditions abroad for various countries.

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TV LISTINGS

Preview: A Beverly Hills parish beckons for the sage of Craggy Island. Father Ted (Channel 4, 9.30pm). Review: Paul Hoggart on Robson Green, a nice lad who can act a bit. Pages 54, 55

Playing to the mob

It is always more tempting, as politicians have done, to focus on the simple, heinous nature of Mary Bell's crime rather than the complex issues of moral responsibility and the possibility of redemption and rehabilitation.

Midnight thunder

Republicans think progress on de-commissioning means their enemies realising it will not happen. They must be disabused. Page 25

Clean sport

Blood tests are helping to reduce drug-taking in cycling. Now is beyond high time for their introduction to clean up other increasingly murky sports. Page 25

COLUMNS

MATTHEW PARRIS

Official Opposition as we now know it is a new idea. I believe Tony Blair is disposed to kill it off, though he may not yet recognise his own intentions.

NOEL MALCOLM

The stakes this time are higher. In the case of Bosnia, the "domino-theory" was never plausible; the worst that could happen (and did) was prolonged mass-murder inside Bosnia, while the world looked on.

OBITUARIES

Ian Trevelyan, former manager of Felixstowe docks; the Rev Professor R. N. Whybray, Old Testament scholar; Kate Bosse-Griffiths, Egyptologist. Page 27

LETTERS

Controversy over Mary Bell book: Israel's anniversary; trouble at the MCC; plight of Iraq. Page 25

Large advertisement on the right side of the page, partially cut off, mentioning 'INSIDE SECTION 2 TOP' and 'Shares take off thanks to US figures'.

كنا من الأصل

INSIDE SECTION 2 TODAY



ECONOMICS Anatole Kaletsky reports from Washington PAGE 33



ARTS Lynda La Plante makes a killing on the Internet PAGES 37-40



MEDIA The real winner on the Big Ticket lottery show PAGES 41-44

LONDON MARATHON TIMES SPORT 48-56

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY MAY 1 1998

Shares take off thanks to US figures

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

SHARES in London and New York soared yesterday after the latest US economic figures showed the country is achieving the "golden scenario" of strong growth combined with negligible inflation.

US GDP grew at a brisk annualised rate of 4.2 per cent in the first quarter while the GDP deflator, a measure of inflation, stood at just 0.9 per cent - its lowest for 35 years.

The employment cost index, a broad measure of pay and benefits, had risen only 0.7 per cent in the first three months of the year.

In London, the FTSE 100 index closed up 95.2 at 5928.3 - the biggest jump since February 2. On Wall Street, the Dow Jones rose 154.95 points to 9,106.47 at midday.

Markets, page 32

Speculation as EMI announces bid approach



Sir Colin Southgate, chairman, has seen the departure of Jim Fifield and Jean-François Cecillon from the troubled music company in recent weeks

Watchdog goes public on Biotech objections

BY PAUL DURMAN

EUROPEAN drug regulators are to take the unprecedented step of publishing a summary of their serious objections to Zacetax, the pancreatitis treatment developed by the beleaguered British Biotech.

The regulators' warning on Zacetax is one of several pieces of important bad news about its drugs that Biotech is accused of failing to report to the stock market.

The European Medicines Evaluation Agency, based in London, said it felt obliged in this "exceptional case" to provide more detailed information about its objections.

Rolf Bass, head of the EMEA's human medicines evaluation unit, said this would allow those interested in British Biotech "to draw the correct conclusions".

As The Times revealed last week, the EMEA told British Biotech of its "major objections" to approving Zacetax as a medicine months before the company told the market that it would not receive approval earlier this year.

Professor Bass confirmed that the EMEA's letter had represented "a serious warning". He added: "It would not be very wise to neglect [a] serious warning."

Within days of receiving a preliminary report that formed the basis of the EMEA's official view, British Biotech issued two upbeat statements about Zacetax to the market.

He said that the EMEA's official view, which went out in June, was similar "in so far as it raises serious objections". British Biotech has declined to discuss the detail of its confidential correspondence with the EMEA, and insisted it still had "a reasonable chance" of getting approval for Zacetax even after receiving the major objections.

because we feel bound to keep quiet." The Times has reported that British Biotech received the major objections in early May 1997.

He said that the EMEA's official report, which went out in June, was similar "in so far as it raises serious objections". British Biotech has declined to discuss the detail of its confidential correspondence with the EMEA, and insisted it still had "a reasonable chance" of getting approval for Zacetax even after receiving the major objections.

paring a detailed response to the numerous allegations it faces, which may not appear for another two weeks.

British Biotech is still preparing a detailed response to the numerous allegations it faces, which may not appear for another two weeks.

Seagram and Kerkorian seen as suitors for UK 'treasure'

BY CHRIS AVRES

EMI admitted yesterday that it had received a bid approach as speculation persisted on both sides of the Atlantic that the troubled music company would be taken over by Seagram, the Canadian drinks and entertainment group.

EMI shares soared 99.5p to 607.5p on the announcement, compared with a low of 430p in February. Analysts said an offer may have to be as high as 750p a share, valuing the company at nearly £6 billion.

In London, reports were circulating that Kirk Kerkorian, the billionaire US corporate raider who controls MGM/UA, had also made an unofficial offer. However, EMI insiders denied these rumours.

EMI's announcement comes after a management debate which has seen the high-profile resignation this month of Jim Fifield, head of the company's US operations, with a £12.5 million payoff.

Two weeks later his counterpart in the UK, Jean-François Cecillon, also resigned.

A successful bid for EMI, chaired by Sir Colin Southgate and one of the world's biggest music companies, which has signed artists such as the Beatles and the Spice Girls, would cause enormous controversy in the UK where it is seen by some as a national treasure.

Commentary, page 31

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

Table with 2 columns: Index Name, Value. Includes FTSE 100, FTSE All share, Nikkei, Dow Jones, S&P Composite.

US RATE

Table with 2 columns: Instrument, Rate. Includes Federal Funds, Long Bond, Yield.

LONDON MONEY

Table with 2 columns: Instrument, Rate. Includes 3-month interbank, Life long gilt, Future (Jun).

STERLING

Table with 2 columns: Location, Rate. Includes New York, London, DM, FF, SF, Yen, S index.

US DOLLAR

Table with 2 columns: Location, Rate. Includes London, DM, FF, SF, Yen, S index.

NORTH SEA OIL

Table with 2 columns: Instrument, Price. Includes Brent 15-day (Jul), Gold.

GOLD

Table with 2 columns: Instrument, Price. Includes London close.

REGAN AGREES CITY GOURMETS REVERSE DEAL

ANDREW REGAN, the entrepreneur behind last year's abortive £1.2 billion bid for the Co-operative Wholesale Society, has agreed a reverse takeover of his quoted vehicle, Lanica Trust, by City Gourmets, the coffee bar chain (Dominic Walsh writes).

Mr Regan and two fellow directors, who own 65 per cent of the shares, worth £3.55 million under the deal, will reduce their holding to 10 per cent.

City Gourmets will be capitalised at £20.9 million and is raising £725,000 to expand its Madisons chain. It is placing new shares at 100p.

Imro fines GA and RBS over Young affair

BY GAVIN LUMSDEN

IMRO, the investment industry watchdog, has ordered General Accident and the Royal Bank of Scotland to pay a total of £800,000 over their role as trustees to two Morgan Grenfell funds at the centre of the Peter Young scandal.

Imro said that both companies had failed to supervise Morgan Grenfell's operation of its Europa and European Growth unit trusts. In particular, they had not prevented consistent breaches of rules limiting what the funds could invest in individual stocks or high-risk unquoted companies.

Morgan Grenfell, a subsidiary of Deutsche Bank, has paid £220 million of compensation to investors since suspension of the funds in September 1996. This followed the dismissal of Peter Young, the firm's leading European fund manager, who is now the subject of an investigation by the Serious Fraud Office.

Imro, which fined Morgan Grenfell £2 million over the affair last year, has nearly completed its inquiry into five directors who left the company in the wake of the scandal. General Accident, which ceased being the funds' trustee just months before the scandal broke in September 1996, was found guilty of four breaches. It is to pay a £120,000 penalty.



Young fund manager

PacifiCorp opens way for Texas in Energy bid battle

BY ROBERT COLE, CITY CORRESPONDENT

TEXAS UTILITIES was left free to buy Energy Group, the electricity and coal company, yesterday when PacifiCorp, its rival bidder, withdrew from the takeover tussle.

PacifiCorp said it would not raise its offer above the \$20p per share it already put before Energy Group shareholders. Texas has offered \$40p in cash. In addition, the Takeover Panel ruled earlier in the week that any new bids should be for at least \$40p.

The Texas Utilities bid values Energy Group, which owns Eastern Electricity in the UK, at £4.5 billion. Energy shares slumped from 865p to 838.5p yesterday.

Fred Buckman, the PacifiCorp president and chief executive, said: "We do not see acceptable financial returns to

Commentary, page 31

Bae takes 35% stake in Saab

BY ADAM JONES

BRITISH AEROSPACE is paying £269 million to take a 35 per cent stake in Saab, the Swedish aerospace and defence group, so assuming the lead in the great shake-up of Europe's aircraft makers.

Faced with the reluctance of the French state to withdraw from its own aerospace champions, BAE is poised to become a magnet for the smaller groups in Europe. The Saab deal could be followed by

Confused? What will you do with a lump sum of £5,000, £25,000, or £250,000? PEPs, Unit Trusts, Building Societies*, TESSAs*... with several thousand investment options to choose from, no wonder you're confused! You need UNBIASED advice. Investor Intelligence, one of the UK's largest groups of independent financial advisers, can help you. Simply call us FREE anytime on 0500-10-10-14 or return the Freepost coupon.

Vertical sidebar with various advertisements and text including 'his end anc', 'NCE', 'Front leader', 'speech coming', 'the National', 'elected to win', 'to the frame', 'scribed as "a", 'our national', 'high is being', 'Front leader', 'worse: "Let us", 'he euro, let us', 'to the franc', 'let us mobilise', 'the European', 'of foury"', 'Front leader', 'from running', 'the elections if a', 'conviction', 'at an upfield.', 'logical', 'crest', 'on the', 'rect" getting', 'eastern', 'World', 'ide against', 'an media', 'ING', 'E"', 'MOSTLY AS FREE', 'AS EY'VE E E"', 'V THEIR I... TIC', 'MARKET', 'RRO', 'TRY', 'store for details.

Eversheds in London merger

By Jon Ashworth

FRERE Cholmeley Bischoff, the law firm, is merging with the London practice of Eversheds to form a 70-strong partnership with fee income of £50 million a year.

The new firm, to be called Eversheds, will have 270 fee earners and be strong in areas such as financial services, insurance, pensions and tax. However, several Frere Cholmeley partners are declining to join, taking expertise in property, private client and corporate media work with them.

Of the refusniks, 11 partners are establishing an independent firm to be known as Forsters. Frere Cholmeley insisted that the split was amicable.

Jonathan Evans, the former Minister for Corporate Affairs at the Department of Trade and Industry, recently joined Eversheds London as director of insurance. Regional Eversheds offices will feed business into the enlarged London practice.

Stagecoach opens route into China

By Fraser Nelson

STAGECOACH, Britain's biggest transport company, is paying £107 million for a stake in a Chinese roadbuilding company in an attempt to win bus contracts in the lucrative province of Guangdong.

The company is also paying £45 million for Prestwick airport, near Glasgow, which it says will prove the foundation for a chain of secondary airports across Europe.

It will recharge its acquisition war chest with a £160 million rights issue.

The company will take a 20 per cent stake in Road King Infrastructure (RKI), which builds and maintains toll roads in China's Guangdong province — earmarked by the Government as a development area for overseas investment.

Mike Kinski, chief executive, said: "The Chinese bus market is difficult to get into if you don't have local partners. When we get contracts (for RKI), we will liaise with local authority officials who look at

giving out bus routes." He added that Stagecoach will gain experience in running toll roads, which would help in its ambition to run UK toll roads.

Prestwick airport, used mainly by freight companies as an alternative to Glasgow airport, is on the shortlist to run its equivalent near Stockholm in Sweden. Mr Kinski said that if Prestwick won the contract, Stagecoach would be able to link up its recently-acquired Swebus subsidiary, which he said was not performing as well as the company originally thought.

Brian Souter, its founder and chairman, said the company's pre-tax profits would be at least £158 million, with earnings per share of 48.1p, for the year to April 30.

A total of 15.5 million new shares are being offered on a 2-for-32 basis at £10.60 apiece. Stagecoach shares jumped 6 1/2 p to £12.08 yesterday.



Tony Hales says Allied Domecq insists on the right deal

Absence of deal news hits Allied

By Dominic Walsh

BETTER than expected half-year results from Allied Domecq, the drinks group, yesterday failed to make up for a lack of news on possible consolidation involving its spirits arm.

Brokers had been hoping for a more positive response to the threat posed by the marriage of Guinness and Grand Metropolitan. As the FTSE index soared by 95 points, shares in Allied fell 6p, to 615p, having at one point dropped to 590p.

However, Tony Hales, chief executive, said: "Any fool can do a deal. What we want is to do the right deal." Any deal, including a demerger, would only be contemplated if it improved earnings "further and faster than we could on our own".

Pre-tax profits rose from £317 million to £320 million in the half to February 28, despite a £35 million currency hit. Earnings per share were 4 per cent better at 21.3p, or 10 per cent better at level exchange rates. A dividend of 9.75p, up from 9.44p, will be paid as a foreign income dividend.

Underlying profits from spirits and wine rose by 10 per cent. Retailing rose 4 per cent.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Healthcare firms to sue BAT in US

BAT, the tobacco group due to report results today, faces a second billion-dollar legal onslaught in America over charges that smoking causes health problems. Private healthcare companies are asking the tobacco companies to pay for decades of treatment of smokers among their clients. "This opens a second front in the war on tobacco," said a lawyer for the health care companies.

The companies are united in a consortium under the banner of the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of America health plans. Blue Cross alleges racketeering, fraud, conspiracy and antitrust violations. In addition to BAT, the suit charges RJR Nabisco, Philip Morris, Liggett Group, Lorillard Tobacco, United States Tobacco and Hill & Knowlton, a public relations company working for the tobacco companies. Blue Cross has not yet stated how much money it will be demanding, but said its suit was modelled on the state suits and its demands are expected to be similar. Almost all the states are suing the makers, holding them responsible for certain public healthcare costs.

Davidge's £716,000

CHRISTOPHER DAVIDGE, chief executive of Christie's International, the fine art auctioneer, was paid £716,000 (£467,000) last year — including a substantial payment towards an overseas living allowance. On top of a base salary of £296,000, Mr Davidge received £301,000 in bonus and profit share — including the living allowance, according to the newly-published 1997 annual report. The figure includes a performance-related bonus. Lord Hindlip, the chairman, received a £77,000 bonus and profit-share.

Goldberg raises £23m

MARK GOLDBERG has raised £23.75 million via the placing of 2.5 million shares in MSB International, the information technology company, with institutional investors. Mr Goldberg, a part-time executive director at the company, intends to use the proceeds to complete the acquisition of an 85 per cent interest in Crystal Palace Football Club. Mr Goldberg has agreed not to dispose of further shares for at least 12 months. The shares were placed at 950p each. MSB shares rose 2 1/2 p to a record 970p.

Confiscation order

A RUSSIAN national jailed for defrauding delegates to non-existent management seminars, has been ordered to repay £680,000. Isleworth Crown Court granted the confiscation order against Svetlana Kouznetsova, 34, who is serving two years for conspiracy to defraud. Her husband, Igor Falkovsky, 35, serving three years for money laundering, was ordered to repay £99,000. Michael Newman, 39, has been ordered to repay £400,000, and his wife, Maria has to find £6,000.

Pentland shares dip

SHARES in Pentland, the Speedo, Ellesse and Lacoste clothing group, fell 5 per cent after the chairman gave warning that the trading environment was "challenging". Stephen Rubin, the chairman, told shareholders at the annual meeting that trading on the high street was mixed and that its troubles were exacerbated by trying conditions in Asian markets. The shares fell 6 1/2 p to close at 113 1/2 p. Observers did not interpret the statement as a profit warning and leading analysts left full-year forecasts unchanged.

Airlines pact on again

UNITED AIRLINES and Delta Air Lines have finally concluded a pricing and bookings pact that they had had to call off last week after protests from pilots. But the alliance of America's biggest and third biggest carriers is flying into heavy political turmoil, and will not apply to flights to and from Europe. The companies said the "regulatory environment there is very uncertain". The pact, which is still subject to approval by the pilots, gives customers pricing and reservation options.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells	Bank Buys	Bank Sells	
Australia \$	2.66	2.48	Malta	0.688	0.629
Austria Sch	22.11	20.45	Netherlands Gld	2.288	3.274
Belgium Fr	65.09	60.19	New Zealand \$	3.15	2.91
Canada \$	2.513	2.325	Norway Kr	13.07	12.13
Cyprus Cyp£	0.922	0.851	Portugal Esc	318.08	397.06
Denmark Kr	12.03	11.14	S Africa Rd	8.15	8.18
Finland Mk	8.88	8.91	Spain Ptas	208.28	247.49
France Fr	10.53	9.75	Sweden Kr	13.75	12.88
Germany Dm	3.16	2.92	Switzerland Fr	2.85	2.44
Greece Dr	350	311	Turkey Lira	418958	400078
Hong Kong \$	13.77	12.37	USA \$	1.778	1.638
Iceland	132	112			
India Ft	7.24	1.16			
Israel Shk	6.57	5.25			
Italy Lira	2137	2900			
Japan Yen	225.79	218.25			

Engels-Hollandse Beleggings Trust N.V.

(English and Dutch Investment Trust)
Established in Amsterdam
Participation Certificates
(Issued by Royal Exchanges Assurance)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the gross dividend for 1997 on the Participation Certificates, entitled to 1 ordinary share of Dfl 1, nominal value, of Dfl 0.08 will be payable in Sterling on or after 11th May 1998 against presentation of coupon no. 48, or as the option of the Certificate holder a stock dividend chargeable to the share premium account.

The Share exchange ratio will be announced after close of business on the AEX Stock Exchange on Friday 8 May 1998.

The cash dividend will be payable as follows, subject to the provisions of the appropriate Netherlands Tax Affidavit where necessary.

To Certificate holders who are subject to United Kingdom Income Tax, less 15 per cent Netherlands Withholding Tax and United Kingdom Income Tax at 5 per cent on the gross dividend.

To residents of other countries with which The Netherlands have concluded tax agreements, under deduction of 15 per cent Netherlands Withholding Tax.

To residents of all other countries, less 25 per cent Netherlands Withholding Tax.

Certificate Holders resident outside the United Kingdom will receive payment less United Kingdom Income Tax at a rate of 20 per cent on the net amount unless the coupon is accompanied by a United Kingdom Affidavit of non-residence.

The aforementioned rates of tax apply only in respect of coupons presented for payment up to and including 11th November 1998. Thereafter Netherlands Withholding Tax will be deducted at the rate of 25 per cent from the net Sterling amount. For the period of 11th May 1998 to 11th November 1998 the dividend will be paid in Sterling at the rate of exchange ruling on the day of presentation of the coupons. Coupons presented thereafter will be paid in Sterling at the rate of exchange ruling on the 11th November 1998.

To obtain payment, coupon no. 48 must be presented at the office of Royal Exchange Assurance, 155 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 3TG, ("the Paying Agent"). Coupons must be listed in numerical order on special forms obtainable from the Paying Agent and must be left five clear days for examination.

For Holders of Participation Certificates opting for stock dividend, coupon no. 48 must be presented at the office of the Paying Agent no later than close of business on 8 May 1998 confirming that they wish to take the option (as Netherlands Withholding Tax will be deducted).

Copies are available on request to the Paying Agent at the above address of the present Conditions relating to the Participation Certificates which conditions replace those printed on the back of the existing Participation Certificates.

Holder of Participation Certificates are entitled to convert their Certificates into ordinary shares quoted in Amsterdam. Holders wishing to convert should apply to the Paying Agent to obtain the necessary forms.

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STOCK MARKET



Michael Cunniff
Stock Market Writer
of the Year

Shield denies bid talk
as shares gather pace

SHIELD DIAGNOSTICS moved to defuse some of the bid speculation that has been powering the shares sharply higher. Yesterday the price touched 642 1/2p before ending the session 50p dearer at 627 1/2p as 509,028 shares changed hands. City speculators claim the company has received an informal bid approach.

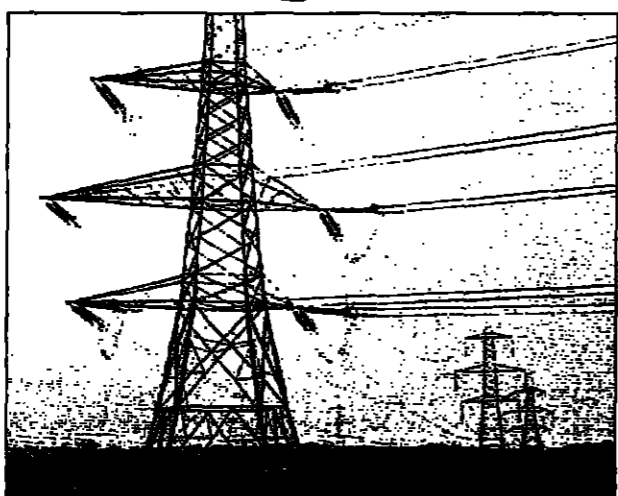
But David Evans, finance director of Shield, told The Times: "We have received no bid approaches, formal or informal. This is the usual City playground gossip. People are operating on margins and have calls to make on those margins."

The Shield share price is trading well below the peak of 805p reached last year, but has gathered pace in recent months on high expectations for its Activated Factor 12 process used to detect heart ailments early. It has also made progress in finding a cure for Alzheimer's disease.

Stockbroker Colin Blackburn of Shore Capital has raised his holding in the company to 615,000 shares, or 3.07 per cent. The heavy mix of strong US economic growth and low inflation fired shares on both sides of the Atlantic. The London stock market got into its stride with the help of a mark-up on Wall Street where investors responded positively to the strong GDP and the fall in the Chicago Purchasing Managers' index and subdued salary costs.

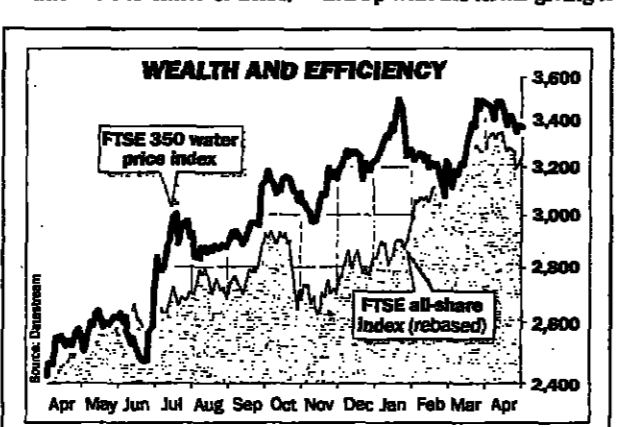
All remaining fears about the Federal Reserve raising rates appears to have evaporated. The FTSE 100 touched 5,954.9 before closing 95.2 up at 5,928.3. Total turnover reached 924 million shares. After several weeks of intense speculation EMI Group has confirmed a bid approach. The shares responded with a leap of 109 1/2p to 607 1/2p as the prospect of another £1 billion bid whetted investors' appetites. Talk in the Square Mile has linked EMI with Seagram, the North American drinks and leisure group. EMI was demerged from Thorn in 1996 and has seen its price steadily decline.

The withdrawal of PacificCorp's 820p a share offer for Energy Group, down 26 1/2p at 838 1/2p, appeared to have a sobering influence on the arbitrageurs. They had been hoping to reap the rewards of an intense bid battle. PacificCorp



Energy Group shares slipped 26 1/2p after PacificCorp pulled its 820p a share offer after a ruling by the Takeover Panel

although their golden shares and market capitalisation would make this difficult. Hambros, one of the few remaining independent merchant banks in the City, has thrown in the towel after agreeing to an offer worth 307p a share from Investec, the South African investment bank. Hambros rose 12 1/2p to 292 1/2p with the terms giving it



THE industry regulator reckons the water companies could become more efficient and cut costs by between 25 per cent and 4 per cent a year. He says a quality programme could be financed through efficiency savings without customers' bills having to rise. Investors are worried that a move to increased efficiency will raise costs and ultimately damage profits. As a result, the water companies came under the hammer yesterday. There were losses for Hyder 13p to 962p, South

a value of £428 million. It has already demerged its remaining interests in Hambro Countrywide, 13p cheaper at 133 1/2p, and Hambro Insurance Services, up 3p at 108 1/2p. There was a move towards reality at British Petroleum as the price retreated 15 1/2p to 944 1/2p. A rogue trade involving more than 12,000 shares at the 960p level at the close of business on Wednesday night sent the price soaring.

Heaviest turnover among the top 100 companies was recorded in BG, up 11p at 319p, as almost 35 million shares changed hands. Reed International dropped 23 1/2p to 320 1/2p after BT Alex Brown, the broker, downgraded the shares from "buy" to "market performer".

A 22 per cent increase in new business levels brought some much needed cheer to Commercial Union, up 82p at £11.9. General Accident also responded to new business numbers with a rise of 86p at £14.06.

A profits warning took its toll of AIM-listed Billam, down 15p at 70p. Shareholders at the annual meeting were told that the delay in placing new contracts had hit sales and would have an adverse impact on first-half profits. Meanwhile, trading conditions remain difficult at Penland Group, down 6 1/2p at 113 1/2p. The group said 1998 would be "challenging".

NRP returned at 70 1/2p after the retention of the shares in January at 69 1/2p, pending the reverse takeover of Teather & Greenwood, the broker. Usborne, the fertilizer supplier, rose 3 1/2p to 24 1/2p after accepting a minority bid of 25p a share from former Hillside Holdings boss David Thomson.

GILT-EDGED: The London market took its lead from firmer US Treasury bonds and the latest data showing economic growth without inflation. In the futures pit, the June series of the long gilt put on £13 1/2 at £108 1/2, while in the conventional market Treasury 7 per cent 2007 rose £ 1/2 to £10 1/2.

NEW YORK: The bulls were charging on Wall Street after new economic data showed robust growth with benign inflation, calming fears of an imminent rise in interest rates. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was up 154.95 at 9,106.47.

MAJOR INDICES

Table of major stock indices including New York (midday), Tokyo, Hong Kong, Amsterdam, Sydney, Frankfurt, Singapore, Brussels, Paris, Zurich, London, FTSE 100, FTSE 250, FTSE 1000, FTSE Europe 100, FTSE All-Share, FTSE Non-Financials, FTSE Financials, FTSE Dow Jones, FTSE Volatility, FTSE German, FTSE Exchange Index, FTSE Bank of England official rates, FTSE ECU, FTSE LSE, FTSE 1000 Mar (2.5% Jan 1997-100), FTSE 1000 Mar (2.5% Jan 1997-100).

RECENT ISSUES

Table of recent issues including AB Airlines, ARM Higgs (575), Aberdeen Civilic, Advent 2 VCT, Close Bros AIM VCT, Desire Petroleum, Do 85% Cov Ln 2005, Do Zero Div Prt, Harford Grp, INVESCO Grd Opps, LLP Group, Microcap Growth Trst, Mosaic VCT 3 (100), Omakars, Oxford Glycosines, Quater VCT 2, Transport Dev B.

RIGHTS ISSUES

Table of rights issues including Fpnt Lts n/p (325), Guinness Pl n/p (20), Memory Crp n/p (20), Mon Oil & Gas n/p (53), Radstone Tech n/p (40).

MARKET CHANGES

Table of market changes including Wagon Ind, Fyffes, Priem Plac, Shield Dag, Sun LIA Grp, Logal & Gen, Photo-Me, Casings, TI, Unilever, Williams, Smithkline, Adrenalid, Colteck, FALLS: Chander Gp, Cotran (A), Croda, Roberts Walters, Energis, Tale & Lyle, BAT, Macro 4, Blacks Lab.

Closing Prices Page 36

TEMPUS Spirited spinster

BEATING market expectations is not something one traditionally associates with Allied Domecq. It was ironic, therefore, that yesterday's better-than-expected interim saw the shares leap 6p to 615p in a strongly rising market. The problem was the entire absence of any news on potential spirits alliances or mergers, a move viewed by most observers as imperative if Allied wants to keep pace with newly-weds Guinness and Grand Metropolitan.

Sir Christopher Hogg, the chairman, responded to questioning on the subject with a rather curt reference to "marrying in haste and repenting at leisure", but the market is becoming worried that Allied may end up being left at the altar. Its ideal marriage partner, Seagram of Canada, looks to have

trained its sights on EMI, while Bacardi and Pernod appear to have opted for bachelorhood. There are other options, of course, and Sir Christopher reiterated that a demerger remained an option. But the recent rejection of a £2.5 billion approach for its retailing side - allied to his confidence in the group's ability to build on yesterday's results - suggests consolidation is no longer viewed within Allied as a sine qua non.

The figures, while unexciting, at least show that the core businesses are being run rather better than was once the case. Despite the near-20 per cent rise in its shares this year, Panmure Gordon set a target price of 630p. A betrothal - even in the form of a distribution alliance rather than a merger - would be the icing on the wedding cake.

Stagecoach

WHAT do you give the bus owner who has everything? After exhausting the bus market in the UK, Brian Souter, chief executive of Stagecoach, has come up with two answers: airports and China. The first one makes sense. In paying £41 million for Prestwick Airport, Mr Souter has also acquired Matthew Hudson - under whose management Prestwick has shot from a loss-making landing strip into a 600,000 passenger-a-year airport. Mr Lang is no less ambitious than Mr Souter, and had been hatching plans to repeat the Prestwick trick across lots of other UK airports. With Stagecoach's vast financial backing, he should make light work of this task.

CU/GA

HEALTHY new business figures from General Accident and Commercial Union demonstrate why composites with a weighting towards life and pensions products are currently favoured over those, like Guardian Royal Exchange, which receive the majority of their premiums from general insurance. While motor insurers in particular struggle to raise their prices in a sector awash with competition, life and investment sales are growing steadily. Publicity about the new individual savings account (Isa) and stakeholder pensions has encouraged more people to think seriously about saving. The question for investors is whether the shares are over-priced. Despite a recent correction, composite insurers have enjoyed a tremendous run over the

WALL STREET

Table of Wall Street market data including various stock prices and indices.

OTHER STERLING

Table of other sterling market data including Argentina peso, Australia dollar, Bahraini dinar, etc.

FTSE VOLUMES

Table of FTSE volumes for various companies.

COMMODITIES

Table of commodity prices including LIFFE, ICIS-LOR, GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES, LIFFE WHEAT, LIFFE BAILEY, LIFFE POTATO, RUBBER, LIFFE SUGAR, LIFFE FIBREX, LIFFE METAL EXCHANGE, LIFFE OILS, LIFFE COPPER, LIFFE ZINC, LIFFE ALUMINIUM, LIFFE NICKEL.

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

Table of London financial futures including Long Gilt, German Govt Bond, Five Year Gilt, Italian Govt Bond, Japanese Govt Bond, Three Mth Sterling, Three Mth Eurobank, Three Mth Eurodollar, Three Mth Euroswap, Three Mth ECU, FTSE 100.

MONEY RATES (%)

Table of money rates including Base Rate, Discount Rate, Treasury Bills, Prime Bank Bills, Sterling Money Rates, Overnight, Local Authority Depos, Sterling CDs, Dollar CDs, Building Society CDs.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Table of European money deposits for various currencies and terms.

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Table of gold and precious metals prices.

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Table of sterling spot and forward rates for various currencies.

Large advertisement on the right side of the page, partially visible, featuring the text 'The S... to be...' and 'Suit h...'. It includes a small image of a person and some decorative elements.

سكروان الاصل

ECONOMIC VIEW



ANATOLE KALETSKY

The good times still seem to be rolling in America

Most things seem to work better in the US than they do in Britain and Europe

Invertebrate bears and sceptics, who have taken to describing America as the next "bubble economy", are again being confounded. The US Government yesterday announced another set of spectacularly favourable economic statistics. Economic growth accelerated to a heady annualised rate of 4.2 per cent in the first quarter, but while the economy soared into the stratosphere, inflation remained firmly on the ground. The closely watched employment cost index, considered to be the best gauge of potential inflationary pressures building up in the pressure cooker of America's labour market, astonished bearish analysts by actually slowing down. Instead of rising 1 per cent, as it did in the previous quarter, total employment costs decelerated to a mere 0.7 per cent. If these figures prove accurate, they could offer another long lease of life for America's economic expansion and the seemingly inexhaustible bull market in global stock markets that has gone with it.

I have been spending a week in America to get a feel for the forces driving the world's most important economy. The most powerful impression that immediately struck me was how very different the world economy looks from a vantage point in the US. The benefits of post-industrial, information-based technology, which were much discussed but rarely observed in the 1980s are now everywhere apparent. Almost everything — from advanced telecommunications to taxi and hotel services — seems to work much better now in America than it did in the 1980s and much better than it does in Britain and Europe. Even more strikingly, the full-employment conditions that have made Americans more secure and prosperous have also made them more willing to embrace change and accept risks.

In principle, therefore, US economic expansion could continue to move forward for many more years. And, on balance, I think it probably will. There are, however, several clouds on the horizon, any one of which could potentially make the economic climate a lot less pleasant in a year or two ahead. The three dangers that are most evident (which may well mean that they are not the ones that will actually do the damage) are the economy in Asia, the threat of accelerating inflation and the possibility of a stock market collapse. Discussing these in turn with numerous American financiers, economists and officials, I



Alan Greenspan, the Federal Reserve chairman, is determined to control inflation

found a strong consensus on the Asian question, but a striking divergence of opinion on the other two points.

On Asia, the view in official US circles and on Wall Street, as well as among the economic technicians at the International Monetary Fund, is fairly clear, although it may seem ambiguous at first. For the US economy, the worst of the Asian effect is already being felt. More precisely, the impact of slumping Asian demand on world trade and US exports is at its maximum about now, although it will not be reflected in official statistics and company results until the early summer.

This assessment may sound rather optimistic, considering that the process of corporate restructuring and demand deflation in Asia has only just begun. But officials in Washington note that their reasonably upbeat view about the impact on America (and, for that matter, Europe) is actually consistent with a pretty gloomy view about the troubles that still lie ahead for the Asian economies themselves. For stricken Asian countries, the worst period of economic hardship probably still lies ahead,

since employment and domestic incomes have only been falling for a few months and corporate restructurings and business failures still have much further to go. But unless there is now a further collapse in one of the two Asian economic giants — Japan or China — the US should not suffer too much additional harm after the second quarter of this year.

Korea's current account, for example, has already moved from deficit to surplus by the equivalent of \$40 billion annually as a result of a sudden one-off stock adjustment last December. This swing has already been far bigger than the \$20 billion to \$30 billion adjustment suggested by even the most pessimistic analyses made at the height of Korea's financial crisis. The implication drawn by IMF officials is that there is little scope for further reductions in Korea's imports, or expansion in net exports, even if domestic conditions continue to get worse.

The US Treasury takes broadly the same view, although it remains worried about the possibility that deflation in Japan could still get out of control. Larry Summers, the

Deputy Treasury Secretary put it like this: "As long as the situation remained contained to the countries which it has affected at present, there may be some further impact in the pipeline, but I would not expect it to be large. The greater risks come from what could happen in the future in other countries, especially Japan."

On the threat of inflation, there is a wider divergence of views. Among the governors of the Federal Reserve, a pessimistic minority, who tend to put most faith in economic models and forecasts, are becoming increasingly agitated about excessively low unemployment and rapid growth. At present, however, these "hawks" are believed to be opposed by the man who matters most — Alan Greenspan, the Fed Chairman.

Mr Greenspan is as determined as anyone to keep inflation under control, but he seems equally determined to fulfil the second part of the Fed's dual mandate, which is to maintain the highest levels of sustainable growth and employment consistent with low inflation. He is also sceptical about conventional economet-

ric models that try to predict inflation on the basis of relationships with employment and growth that prevailed in the past ten or 20 years. With inflation consistently coming in far below the levels predicted by the models, as they did again yesterday, Mr Greenspan's scepticism seems justified. Mr Greenspan is believed to be firmly supported in all these views by the two other most senior Fed officials — Alex Rivlin, the vice-chairman, and William McDonough, the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

But to note that the key people at the Fed are in no rush to raise interest rates, is not to imply that US interest rates will remain for the rest of the year at their present level or even drift lower, as some analysts, especially in Europe, seem to believe. The fact is that even the Fed "doves", led by Mr Greenspan, believe that America's present rate of economic expansion is unsustainably strong. They are also worried about the possibility that the stock market boom may turn out to be a bubble, which explodes in a devastating financial crash. This is perhaps the most serious and unpredictable danger to the US economic expansion at present.

The Fed would not tighten monetary policy just to deflate the stock market — indeed American officials are far less convinced than many European commentators that the asset boom really is a bubble. They also note that the Fed has neither the legal mandate, nor the technical ability, nor the philosophical inclination to try to control or manipulate asset prices. The stock market may well be unsustainably high, but comparisons with the speculative excesses of 1929 or 1989 in Tokyo are mostly dismissed as far fetched.

In any case, American officials seem convinced that even if Wall Street were to suffer a serious blow-out, their economy could pass through the storm without too much damage. I asked Mr Summers whether a stock market crash would push the US economy into recession. He seemed confident. Both consumption and investment would naturally be badly hit, but an economic collapse of the kind suffered in Japan was very unlikely. The US authorities, he noted, had both the capacity and the determination to prevent deflationary shocks getting out of control. "We have a better understanding than in past financial crises of the use of countercyclical monetary policy and an ability to respond to deflationary shocks than we had in the past."

My feeling is that this confidence is justified. US asset prices may be on the high side and the economic news may indeed be a bit too good to be true. But the generally robust health of the US economy and financial markets is firmly underpinned by skilful economic management as well as exceptionally good business fundamentals.

Millar's obstinate stance a bitter pill for British Biotech

When Andy Millar was working in Japan at the end of the 1980s, his colleagues called him *ishi-atama* — literally "stone head", meaning obstinate person. From an obstinate race like the Japanese, Dr Millar was happy to take this as a compliment.

As British Biotech knows to its cost, Dr Millar has obstinacy in spades. Refusing to accept his dismissal last week, the former director of clinical research has acted as the catalyst in a chain of events that looks set to claim the scalp of Keith McCullagh, the drug development company's founder and chief executive, and also the Government's adviser on high-technology companies.

In the process, he has helped to uncover a series of apparently serious failures by British Biotech to report bad news to the stock market in a timely manner. Dr Millar, 43, says that he was reluctantly forced into a media war by the company's attempt to smear him through selective press leaks.

He says, and can point to supportive documents, that he had already spent much of last year in internal battles with Dr McCullagh and other directors in a failed attempt to force them to recognise that British Biotech's strategy was based on "extreme and unfounded optimism" in the hopes of success for its cancer and pancreatitis drugs.

There is a clear streak of self-righteousness in Dr Millar, and he readily concedes to an arrogance that is based on supreme confidence in his own intellect. Dr Millar, who comes from a family of medics, is one of a handful of British doctors who are both members of the Royal College of Physicians and Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons. John Gordon, a former British Biotech director, says this gives Dr Millar medical expertise of rare

Paul Durman on the medic waging a media war against his ex-employer

breadth, adding: "He is a remarkable man." Moreover, at Cambridge Dr Millar actually started studying engineering and has a flair for probability theory — which, he says, is why he can be so confident about the pancreatitis drug's poor chances of success. Dr Gordon says that he has observed him perform astounding feats of mental arithmetic.

Dr Millar is pitting his judgment against that of John Raisman, 69, the former head of Shell UK who is British Biotech's chairman and who is backing Dr McCullagh all the way. Mr Raisman dismisses Dr Millar's views as "idiosyncratic" and says that he is amazed at the lowly 40 per cent chance of success that Dr Millar attaches to marimastat, the cancer drug.

Worryingly for British Biotech, even some of those

caught up in the allegations attest to Dr Millar's straightforward and honest nature. Dr Millar's battle has cost him 500,000 options, but he has not done badly for the company: he made £300,000 from options in December 1995 and, more embarrassingly, £200,000 last August — long after his concerns first arose.

He says he cleared the August sales with Tony Veir, the company secretary, even telling him that he was "betting against the board". He says: "If someone feels that's fraudulent or needs investigating, they'll come and get me, and I'll pay it back if I have to."

Some criticism him for "unbinding" drug trial data to look at the emerging results, claiming that the Food & Drug Administration regard this as unethical. Other experts disagree.

Passionate in his views, Dr Millar is clearly not an easy man to work with. Irritated by the refusal of Dr McCullagh and the other directors to accept his arguments, he seems to have spent much of the last three years alternately threatening to resign or being threatened with the sack. In one resignation letter he drafted, he lists at least ten important disputes over the clinical research programmes.

After six years with British Biotech, Dr Millar would prefer to stay involved with marimastat, which he regards as a genuinely interesting and important drug. That will not happen while Dr McCullagh remains in place.

Dr Millar's recollection of his last meeting with Dr McCullagh before his suspension last month are that a departing business partner told him: "You sure ask a lot of difficult questions." Smiling proudly, Dr McCullagh commented: "He's always asking me a lot of them." To which Dr Millar responded: "Yes, Keith, but you never give me the answers."



Millar: supreme confidence

BUSINESS LETTERS

Support for small business sector is greater than ever

From the Minister for Small Firms Sir, I read with interest the article in your small business section (April 28) quoting John Redwood as criticising the Government for imposing a greater tax burden on small companies.

Mr Redwood notably failed to point out that the Chancellor reduced corporation tax for small companies to 20p and that it will not rise above this level for the lifetime of this Parliament. If ever there were a clear indication of the Government's support for SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises), then this is it.

He also failed to point out that small and medium-sized companies are exempted from having to pay corporation tax in quarterly instalments. Those that pay dividends will gain a cash flow advantage of

about £1 billion from the abolition of advance corporation tax, freeing funds for investment.

The Department of Trade and Industry is continually improving its service to SMEs. The Late Payment Bill, currently going through Parliament and not, as Mr Redwood says, just being proposed, has been very well received by businesses of all sizes. Over 27,000 businesses in the small firms bracket used Business Links in the last quarter where figures are available, with the majority saying they are happy with the service. I will be introducing further measures throughout the year to bring all Business Links up to the standard of the best.

As regards Mr Redwood's other criticisms, the mobile phone industry has stated that the Wireless Telegraphy Act

does not represent a new tax on mobile phones. And a long-term, stable economic environment is surely much more beneficial than a return to the boom and bust mentality of the previous Government.

Finally, I am struck that Mr Redwood is unable to offer any solutions to alleged problems. The reason? Because the problems are only alleged. They bear no relevance to what is happening in the business community — not dissimilar to the Tories in that sense. Let me reassure your readers that the Government will continue in its work to create a long-term economic growth for the benefit of us all.

Yours faithfully, BARBARA ROCHE, Minister for Small Firms, Department of Trade and Industry, 1 Victoria Street, SW1.

Suit hoot

SOMEBODY is stirring up trouble ahead of the Mansion House speech at the end of July. Last year, you will recall, Gordon Brown shocked the City by turning up in a lounge suit — except that the whole thing was a media hype and no one cared much either way. Now I hear that selected political journalists are being wound up to create another unnecessary fuss. It is being put about that the City is being silly and stuffy again and insisting on black ties. Except that it isn't. The official invite says wear what you like. I could not say who would want

to cause mischief in this way, while making Gordon Brown seem a real man of the people again, but the name Charlie Whelan keeps cropping up.

GLITCH at the relaunch of the Mirabelle, the latest swanky restaurant to get the Marco Pierre White treatment in joint venture with Granada. Alas, the gardener got the Marco Pierre White treatment, too, and there are bare concrete blocks where fragrant rosemary beds should flourish. "They are obviously going to have to fly somebody else in to finish it," says my informant.

I have no idea what the bad-tempered chef said to Johnny Bell, a big name in landscape gardening, but if White was as rude to him as he was to me when our paths last crossed, I doubt he bothered to unlock his secreters. An aide admits dolefully: "It's not very jardi-niere. We've postponed the Country Living shoot."

Spinning tales

THEY all come back in one guise or another, but the re-emergence of Philip Birch, the slick operator behind the



stores group Ward White, takes the biscuit. Birch has been quiet, and rightly so some would say, since he persuaded Boots to pay £900 million for the company in 1989. Boots has regretted the deal ever since, having grotesquely overpaid at the top of the market for a ragbag of chains including Halfords and a couple of obscure DIY retailers.

Birch has now set up Holborn Public Relations. I ring him to ask his qualifications as a spin doctor but am told: "He doesn't come into the office." So I decide, in a spirit of pure altruism, to try to put a bit of business his way and phone Boots to see if they fancy hiring him. "Ha, ha, ha," says my source, although his laughter has a hollow ring.

But give the guy a break, we all have to start somewhere. "Ha, ha, ha. If anything, he would be remembered here for spinning a yarn. Maybe that's what he's good at."

A FRIGHTFUL tussle at GMTV, which had slotted in a live interview with Gerry Robinson of Granada the other morning to talk about his chairmanship of the Arts Council. Robinson is known for his relaxed approach to the hours he works, and when the early limo arrived to pick him up from his Holland Park home he was still in the land of nod. No one knew what to do, because Granada owns 20 per cent of GMTV, and you don't tell the boss to get a move on, do you? Except that had they known, Robinson is the most unassuming of chaps and would have been full of profuse apologies.

Family feud

AFFAIRS in the Feld household go from weird to weirder. We last left Robert Feld, the disgraced hotel tycoon, in Coldingley Open Prison being sued by his sister, Roberta, for the money she lost when Resort Hotels collapsed as a result of his fraud. A new writ lands on my desk from Robert Feld and Tara Feld, again issued by Harkavys, the fam-

ily solicitor, and once more against Robert, three other Resort directors and Coopers & Lybrand, the auditors.

Tara is Robert's wife, of whom he spoke so movingly a few weeks back: "I have been fortunate to have had the fantastic support of a close family..." Now she, too, is suing him, as joint executor, along with his sister, of the estate of his mother, who died recently. The estate lost £200,000 in the Resort collapse, and the executors want it back. So it can be inherited by the Feld family, whose patriarch is Robert Feld, the man whose fraud lost the money in the first place. Only in a courtroom could any of this make sense.

MARTIN WALLER



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GA and CU ensure smooth run-in to merger

By MARIANNE CURPHEY
INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

GENERAL ACCIDENT and Commercial Union, the two composite insurers that are planning to complete a merger next month, yesterday confirmed the recent trend of healthy sales growth in life and pensions products.

GA Life said it saw "strong new business growth" in all its main life business areas with a 25.5 per cent rise in new annualised premium income to £59 million in the first three months of 1998.

Commercial Union unveiled an increase in worldwide new business of 22 per cent in local currency terms to £981 million. However, Credit Lyonnais Laing said that after stripping out currency movements and a recent acquisition the annualised figure was that at 2 per cent.

In the UK, new annual premiums were 32 per cent higher at £15 million, boosted by an increase in the sale of individual pensions after new product launches. However, sales of investment bonds fell, with single premium sales 23 per cent lower.

General Accident reported an increase in pension sales of 18 per cent at £26 million, comprising a 27 per cent increase in new annual premiums to £14 million and a 4 per cent rise in new single premiums to £118 million. On the life assurance and investment side of the business, sales rose by 32 per cent to £33 million, comprising a 52 per cent rise in new single premiums to £231 million and new annual premiums remaining at £10 million.

Old guard to go in McDonald's shake-up

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

MICHAEL QUINLAN, the McDonald's chief executive, made many mistakes during his tenure but he was right when he said last month: "My job is always on the line." Yesterday he lost it.

McDonald's used to be a favourite of Warren Buffett, the investment guru, but under Mr Quinlan's stewardship the fast-food chain lost customers to Burger King, offended its franchisees and failed to lift its share price in America's bull market of the century.

The appointment of Jack Greenberg will raise a cheer at business schools around the country. Mr Greenberg is a new-style "corporation man" with university degrees in law and accounting. The closest he has come to flipping hamburgers are Sunday barbecues in his own garden.

Mr Quinlan, on the other hand, comes from a generation of American businessmen who believe in the myth of the self-made man. The 53-year-old Quinlan has worked at McDonald's, his only employer, for more than three decades. He started as a \$2-an-hour mailroom clerk and has probably visited more McDonald's restaurants than anyone in America.

His failure to placate franchisees is all the more surprising for it they call McDonald's a marketing failure. Dick Adams, who heads a franchisee group, said: "The problem isn't how the burgers are cooked. It's the personality of the chief executive." Mr Quinlan is not only a self-made man in a boardroom of MBAs, he is also incredibly shy. His colleagues call him Q - not for Quinlan, but for question mark (Michael who?). Mr Quinlan will remain chairman.

"I have been CEO for more than a decade and I think it is time to utilise the tremendous depth of management skill at McDonald's as we move into the next century," Mr Quinlan said yesterday. "I'm proud to pass the baton to Jack Greenberg."

The management changes come after McDonald's announced plans to reorganise its home office, including redundancies, to implement a new made-to-order food production system across the US, and to help franchisees to pay for the new system.



Series: HIT's Peter Orton with Kipper the Dog, who he says may be the new Snoopy

Kipper the Dog shows he is a big HIT

By RAYMOND SNODDY

HIT ENTERTAINMENT, the programme production, animation and merchandising group, said yesterday it had nearly doubled pre-tax profits to £1.1 million in the six months to the end of January - helped by Kipper the Dog.

Thirteen ten-minute episodes of the rather fey, sardonic, cartoon canine went down well on ITV and a further 26 episodes have been ordered. By putting all 39 of the episodes together HIT can fulfil an order from Nickelodeon, the American children's channel, for 13-half-hour Kipper shows in the US next year.

"We believe this is potentially a new Snoopy," said Peter Orton, the chairman of HIT which owns the television and video rights to Kipper and links to the merchandising rights.

The BBC has ordered a new four-part series of *Bramble Hedge*, where field mice rather than dogs are the stars. The series will be made in HIT's own animation studio, which opened in March.

HIT's pre-tax profits rose 91 per cent to £1.14 million (£600,000) on turnover down from £6.6 million to £6 million. Earnings per share were up by 44 per cent to 4.9 p. The dividend is 0.55p (0.5p).

Hambros accepts Investec cash offer

By JASON NISSÉ

HAMBROS signalled the end of its 86 years as a public company yesterday when the group accepted a provisional £428 million cash offer from Investec Group, the South African financiers that recently bought Guinness Mahon.

The deal follows the £231 million sale of Hambros's merchant banking operations to Société Générale and depends on shareholder approval for the handing out of the Hambros's shares in Hambro Countrywide, the estate agency business, and Hambros Insurance Services.

What Investec will then buy is the cash left in Hambros; its 44 per cent stake in Guinness Flight, the investment manager in which Investec acquired 44 per cent as part of the Guinness Mahon deal; a 33 per cent stake in Strategic Value Corporation, a Canadian fund manager; and a series of investments stretching from Berkeley Hambro, the property group, to Centaur Communications, the magazine publisher.

Investec intends to retain most of the investments though it is prepared to sell some if the opportunities arise. The management of Guinness Flight - led by the Howard Flight, the Conservative MP - has resisted the takeover. However, Bernard Kantor, managing director of Investec, said it would go ahead with the deal to buy the fund manager even if the managers opposing the deal left the company.

MCI beats hopes despite 66% drop

MCI, the US telecoms company, suffered a 66 per cent fall in first-quarter net income, to \$101 million (about £60 million), but still beat Wall Street expectations because of strong growth in revenue and traffic.

MCI, the second-largest long-distance company in the US, has agreed to merge with WorldCom, another American company, in preference to British Telecom. First-quarter revenue increased by 8.3 per cent, to \$5.3 billion. Traffic grew by 13.8 per cent.

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

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THE LANDROVER ACT 1998
THE MORTGAGE ACT 1998
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LM&M, NORTHWEST SCOTLAND
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Charm Equipment Holdings
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Powerscreen gets report on Matbro

By ADAM JONES

POWERSCREEN investors will have an explanation of the engineering group's financial irregularities in the next few days after the announcement yesterday that KPMG, the accountant, has submitted the delayed results of its investigation to the board.

Powerscreen has also completed the sale of assets from its Matbro subsidiary to Deere & Co. of the US, for £7 million, strengthening the group's battered share price. The shares closed at 190p, up 8p, they were 52½p in January, before Powerscreen disclosed that irregularities at Matbro had left the group facing a £46.7 million charge.

Matbro makes telescopic handling equipment. KPMG has been investigating its problems, and it is understood that draft conclusions have been presented to the board in the past few days.

Powerscreen said that the charge is now likely to be £46.6 million. The Matbro sale involves rights to Matbro designs plus certain tooling, fixtures and items of work.

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Advertisement for The Scottish Provident Institution, featuring a logo with a crown and the letters 'kpn'. The text includes details about the 1997 KPN Annual Report, a meeting of shareholders on June 26, 1998, and contact information for G Henderson, Secretary, at 7-11 Melville Street, Edinburgh EH3 7YZ. A date of 1st May 1998 is also mentioned.



Equities extend rally

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Table of equity prices for various sectors including ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, BANKS, BREWERIES, PUBS & REST, BUILDING MATERIALS, CHEMICALS, CONSTRUCTION, DISTRIBUTORS, ELECTRICITY, ELECTRONIC & ELECT, ENGINEERING, FOOD MANUFACTURERS, HEALTHCARE, HOUSEHOLD GOODS & TEXT, INVESTMENT TRUSTS, LEISURE & HOTELS, OIL & GAS, PHARMACEUTICALS, PRINTING & PAPER, PROPERTY, RETAILERS, FOOD, RETAILERS, GENERAL, SUPPORT SERVICES, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT, and WATER.

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Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, partially obscured, with text including 'Aunt of W', 'Saints', 'Muted Mahler', and 'LSO/Tilson Thomas'.

Handwritten text at the bottom center of the page: 'مكتبة من الأصل'.

سوزان ماركلاند

Which soap bramwashes whiter?

Australians are up in arms, or at least spluttering into their Dongawonga Riesling, over the revelation that their Government had been planning to infiltrate ministerial propaganda into much beloved TV soap operas. The *Sydney Morning Herald* has published a leaked secret report which recommends that officials "persuade" TV producers to introduce plots that will "counteract negative publicity" for less-than-acclaimed government policies.

The Howard administration's biggest problem is selling its "common youth allowance", a splendid euphemism for a plan to slash benefits for unemployed youngsters. Would a well-placed endorsement from that nice Billy in *Neighbours* — or, better still, delectable Chloë in *Home and Away* — turn public opinion in the Government's favour? Clearly the spin-wizards of Oz think so.

It's rather a sinister development, don't you think? If you want to win the hearts and minds of a well-educated, affluent nation in

1998, it seems, you don't write a compelling newspaper article, or put your case on a current-affairs programme, or debate passionately in Parliament. *Passé darlings*. You get some compliant TV producer to slip your message into the mouth of a revered soap star.

Of course in Britain we never confuse soap fantasy with real life. Oh no? Just whisper the dreaded words "Deirdre from *Coronation Street*" and you will, it seems, have the Prime Minister's full attention. He knows where the priorities lie.

I became aware of the huge power of the soaps after a curious encounter some years ago. I walked into a church to find the priest up a ladder with a bag full of light bulbs, which he was screwing into dozens of empty sockets. "Gosh," I said, in the special hushed tone one reserves for ecclesiastical occasions. "You've

had quite a blow-out. Was it the power of the Holy Spirit?" "No," he replied, "the power of unholly television. Last week *Orange Hill* showed kids stealing bulbs from churches, and since then every unlocked church in London has had their pinched."

In fact, British politicians have already latched on to soap-power. A sinister precedent was set last December. *The Sun* reported that Peter Mandelson had persuaded the producers of the BBC's *EastEnders* to mix a few glowing references to the Millennium Dome into the saloon chat at the Queen Vic. "The TV role," *The Sun* noted, "is part of a huge drive to ensure the project is a success."

So what will Labour's thought-police target next? Will Alastair Campbell be putting the screws on *Brookside* to add a few approving comments about Lord Irvine's



RICHARD MORRISON

wallpaper to the doorstep gossip in Britain's most famous cul-de-sac? Who knows? I am only surprised that Labour swept to power one year ago. The usual supposition is that nearly everyone in the arts

Meanwhile, back in Australia the Government, having had its soap-opera incursions ridiculed, may turn to Plan B in its attempt to woo disaffected youth. Which is? According to the *Herald*, the politicians want to print like political slogans on McDonald's napkins. Goodbye-soundbite: hello bite-bite. I can hardly wait for that to catch on here. What better way to complement the exquisite aura of a quarter-pounder with cheese than to bed it in a tissue decorated with the *motus justus* of Peter Mandelson? Mmm, yummy.

So what is the arts world's verdict on the first 12 months? Are the luvvies bewitched, bothered or bewildered? A little of all three, I would say. Bewitched in the sense that, despite much contrary evidence, arty folk still believe this Government to be pro-culture — as they did not believe the last lot were. Bothered, not to say scared witless, by ever-falling subsidies. And bewildered by Labour's obsession with the mirage of "Cool Britannia", which has alienated huge numbers of the very luvvies it was presumably intended to flatter.

Labour has had some successes. Reform is under way at the Arts Council. Arts lottery money is being freed to support artistic life, rather than the building trade. Good schemes to widen access to the arts are at last getting proper official support. And Richard

Eyre's report on opera in London due this month, may at last suggest a practical way to restore Covent Garden's credibility.

But Labour has scored on potentially disastrous own goals: the decision to exclude music art from the mandatory primary school curriculum. Last week *The Times Educational Supplement* surveyed 700 schools in the wake of that decision, and found that one in five had already cut music teaching, and some had dropped the subject altogether.

That is exactly as one has feared. David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, may say that technically he hasn't abolished music teaching in primaries. True, but he sent a strong signal that it was OK to drop the subject, and this is the result. The damage that this will do to British musical life in the future, in my view, outweighs any small improvements that this Government may have achieved in other cultural fields. Let's hope that Labour's second year brings second thoughts.

Auntie's lack of war effort

When the British Broadcasting Corporation was a mere ten-year-old it had already chosen to behave as the nation's nanny, and as the 1930s turned nasty it became still more determined to keep listeners ignorant of dictators who were rough.

Stephen Poliakoff's latest play, set for the most part on BBC premises in the two years between the Abdication and the start of the Second World War, traces efforts by some opponents of ignorance to let the people know. I have no idea if any attempts to do this actually developed beyond the occasional internal memo (excerpts are published in the programme), but the improvised programmes we watch being broadcast at crucial turns of the plot are certainly inconceivable. Poliakoff's play is thus a combination of "what if?" and "what prevented?" and divides into two distinct parts. In the first, factual documentation takes precedence over fantasy; after the interval fantasy rules.

Tim Hatley's design attaches Art Deco plaques to the galleries and places the action against a soaring pattern of

THEATRE Talk of the City Swan, Stratford

metal fretwork seen through tinted glass. The women's hairdos unmistakably date the play to the late Thirties but, if that were not enough, performers and newsreaders wear evening dress.

While Rome burnt Nero played the fiddle, and while Europe catches fire the BBC presents cosy concert parties and fatuous detective mysteries. Poliakoff evidently considers they should have highlighted the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany, and that this might have prevented another war. Arguing this case is Clive, a confident upper class anti-establishment figure, charmingly played by Angus Wright, lean, incisive and possibly not quite 7ft tall. Clive seems to live a charmed existence at the heart of the BBC, even helping to draft Edward VIII's abdication speech, clear-sighted where all around him wear blinkers.

His discovery that Robbie, a song-and-dance man from Light Entertainment, has the

ability to think fast in front of the mike, and dart smoothly from merry to sombre, gives him the idea that such a presenter could lull listeners into listening and shock them into confronting the horrors developing in central Europe. His attempts to do this, Robbie's response and its consequences constitute the play.

The pretensions of prim executives and company loyalists make good drama when presented as drags on liberty, and Poliakoff does this well, directing his own play. He fairly presents the effects of the previous war through the intriguing character of Isabel, poignantly played by Kelly Hunter, and his ability to crystallise an idea into one brilliant image is shown when Robbie demonstrates horror on a German lake. David Westhead's performance is warm, subtly shaded and intelligent, even though the character is unimaginable.

But as the play strides purposefully into the fantasy of unsupervised broadcasts, where players can adlib entire episodes of a radio thriller, its foundations slide too fast to hold the superstructure.

JEREMY KINGSTON



This is the BBC. Thirties song-and-dance man Robbie (David Whitehead) offers light entertainment with Susan (Sara Markland) as war looms

Saints, sinners and a few laughs

Bernard Farrell has been engaged in a long-running battle about seriousness. His defenders have often complained that his frequently very funny comedies have not garnered the quality of attention routinely awarded to a new production by a McGuinness or a Friel. It is laudable, it seems, to examine the human condition through straight drama, but not through comedy. Introduce a little laughter and it can be difficult to savour, or even spot, the breast-beating.

Examine Farrell's latest, *Kevin's Bed*, without the big, physical performance of Eamon Morrissey as the plastic-kneed patriarch Dan, and it is a grim story, exploring masculinity, religion, memory and loss. Add Morrissey to the picture, and laughter inevitably follows.

Looking back 25 years, as the Gillespie family gather to celebrate the silver anniversary of Doris (Barbara Brennan) and Dan (Morrissey), things seem to be unravelling. Younger son Kevin (David

Kevin's Bed Abbey, Dublin

Parnell) has returned to Ireland after going Awol from the Vatican, where he was in training to be a priest. Like any young priest worth his weight in scapulars, he is followed by a Neapolitan carrying his unborn child. He is also fondly attended by Betty (Catherine Walsh), a local girl he once lured to Kevin's Bed, the Wicklow cave that gives the play its name.

Farrell's reference to Kevin's Bed perhaps relates to the anecdote about Saint Kevin, who was reputedly so shocked when a female admirer visited his hermit's cave that he pushed her off the mountain to her death. Contemporary Irishmen, at least in Farrell's vision, are hardly better at dealing with female sexuality. Kevin still has enough uncer-

tainty to ruin not just his own life, but the life of his wife and, for good measure, his brother's fiancée.

His schoolteacher brother, John (Sean Rocks), isn't faring much better. After a vague but serious sex crime involving one of his students, John was imprisoned and then took flight to Bristol to become a driving instructor.

With a set-up like that, it is impressive how well director Ben Barnes and his cast find the piece's laughter as the action flutters backwards and forwards in time.

Frank Hallinan Flood's sets, a drab Irish kitchen converted in the second act to an Italian minimalist dream, and Tony Wakefield's smooth lighting help to bind the competing moods of the play. In the final moments, when through a kitchen window we see an idyll of childhood innocence, the two designers unite in some gorgeous, unsettling theatricality.

LUKE CLANCY

CONCERTS: European and American classics in London and Manchester

Muted Mahler

LSO/Tilson
Thomas
Barbican

AS A Mahler conductor, Michael Tilson Thomas can sometimes be a touch too flamboyant. There was Mahler in his concert with the London Symphony Orchestra on Wednesday night, but no hint of effect for the sake of it. Perhaps any crowd-pulling instincts were diverted into the accompanying pieces by Copland and Bernstein, both better able to absorb them.

The Mahler item consisted of four of the Rückert Lieder with Thomas Hampson the fully committed baritone soloist. *Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder* was delivered with engaging self-deprecation, while *Um Mitternacht* rose to a suitably apocalyptic climax and *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen* inhabited a rapt sphere of world-weary solitude.

Isolation and loneliness are also somewhat surprisingly to the fore in Bernstein's *A Quiet Place*, from which we heard the concert suite devised by Sid Ramin and Tilson Thomas himself. The suite begins with

the death in a car-crash of a character called Dinah, and progresses through the grief-stricken aria of her husband Sam to a tender finale. This is a far more introverted, soulful Bernstein than usually encountered and Tilson Thomas and the LSO did it full justice. Even the *Jazz Trio* conveyed a nice sense of irony in its depiction of sleazy hedonism.

Before the performance of Copland's Symphony No.3, Tilson Thomas made some interesting observations about the American's ambivalence towards Mahler. He found the supposed sentimentality difficult to take, but was clearly influenced by Mahler's long-suspension lines and protracted harmonies. The ethereal, high string line, stretched out to infinity, at the opening of the slow movement certainly bore witness to this influence, as did the even more etiolated sonorities at the close.

For the rest, though, this was Copland in forthright, big-hearted mood and both conductor and players were in their element. The energy of the Scherzo, with its rip-roaring conclusion, was but a token of what was to come. The finale, opening with the celebrated *Fanfare for the Common Man*, accumulated momentum in the virtuosic jazzy rhythms of the fugue to raise the roof in an exuberantly ear-splitting coda.

BARRY MILLINGTON

Tour of triumph

Detroit SO/Järvi
Manchester

AT A time when a number of foreign orchestras on tour in this country come here for fairly cynical reasons Neeme Järvi and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra make particularly welcome visitors. From the beginning of their generously proportioned concert in the Bridgewater Hall to the end of their second encore, they played with refreshing vitality and great skill in a programme so varied that it might almost have been designed to catch them out.

It is an indication of Järvi's wisdom as music director that he will be conducting the same programme in only two other places on the tour. Given an itinerary which will take them to 16 different concert halls in eight countries in just three weeks, the temptation must be to cut down on the time and effort involved in rehearsal and play more or less the same thing everywhere they go.

But, as anyone who remembers his four years as conductor of the (then) Scottish National Orchestra must be aware, Järvi does not work like that. His belief in sponta-

neity is such that he is less likely to drill his instrumentalists into a routine than take them by surprise — as he does when he mounts the rostrum, briefly acknowledges the audience and then turns to the orchestra with the down-beat already in motion.

The beginning of Schumann's Third Symphony, which can be a turgid experience, was startlingly effective partly for that very reason. He did not sustain the freshness in every subsequent part of the work but that was a matter more of incomplete stylistic compatibility than insufficient motivation.

In spite of a highly charged account of the Second Suite from Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloë* stylistic compatibility was most in evidence in the American and Russian items in the programme. Well, yes, the Detroit SO ought to be able to play Copland's *Billy the Kid* as to the manner born. But it is fascinating how Järvi himself, Estonian by birth and American by citizenship, is making himself American by musicianship too.

If he and his orchestra were even more inspired in Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto it was surely as a result of their partnership with Leif Ove Andsnes, a fearless, brilliantly intelligent soloist with a sense of the grotesque as well developed as his sensitivity to the most subtle nuances of colour.

GERALD LARNER

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Tune in and turn on to Duffy FM

After his spell with Duran Duran, Stephen Duffy dropped out of the Eighties. Now he has reinvented himself

The mountains are being eroded of gold: we're running out of undiscovered geniuses. Nick Drake's been on the cover of *Mojó*. Elliott Smith was holding Celine Dion's hand at the Oscars. Spiritualized are on a Toffee Crisp advert, and everyone's banging on about Terry Callier. By my reckoning, we're down to four. The other three don't matter right here. The fourth, however, is rarer than panda eggs: Stephen Duffy is the only undiscovered genius in the world to come from Birmingham.

Of course, he's covered his tracks a bit over the years: in the Eighties he was Tin Tin, then Dr Calcutt, then the Lilac Time. In the Nineties he was Stephen Duffy featuring Nigel Kennedy; Duffy; Me Me with Alex from Blur and Justin from Elastica and now, for his current album, simply Stephen Duffy. He is also, from the Lilac Time onwards, and missing out the Britpop diversion of *Duffy* but including his magnificent new album, one of a select few with real biddable magic at his fingertips: that rare, silvery, shivery sheen that can't be faked.

The story behind Stephen Duffy's lack of chart medals is the story of why the Eighties were so dreadful. Being a Birmingham boy who could play guitar, Duffy was roped into Duran Duran for their first six months; their first gig, he recalls, was in a puppet theatre, and they tried to jazz the event up by showing slides of John Taylor's geography field trip. "It was all lighthearted rock," Stephen sighs, disgustedly. "My geography field trip slides were much better."

As the decade took its irrevocably horrid course, and Duran

Duran's uptight pop punches spurred the nation's big-haired Thatcherism ever onwards, Duffy tactically withdrew: packed his Beatles and Nick Drake records and took off with a friend to Jamaica, where he listened to Nick Drake's *Riverman*, wherein Drake sings "Going to tell her all I can/About the plan for lilac time". As stories about the inception of bands go, the Lilac Time's is a sight better than Symposium's dim yarn about all meeting down the pub.



CAITLIN MORAN

Charged with Drake's message from beyond the grave, Duffy returned to England, settled himself in the Malverns, and became an ecstatic pop folk pastoralist: Laurie Lee with a guitar. Duffy translated the turrety hills, the endless midday blue and the evening's pollenous dusk-haze into albums of real, drownable magic. He wrote then, as he still writes, from a sensualist's world. Falling in love is an unassuageable hunger; the day begins when the lights are turned off; a body turns into a landscape and landscapes recall lovers' bodies. His back catalogue is like walking into a harem of songs, all of which are desperate to ravish you. The weight of this gold

is reinforced by the first 30 seconds of Duffy's latest album, *I Love My Friends*. A restless hand spins the tuning dial on a radio. By some wondrous feat of alternative universe hopping, every radio station is playing one of Duffy's should-have-been hits: the hymn-like *Julie Christie*, the absolute FM-seduction of *American Eyes*; *Natalie's* viola swoon.

"Yes, it's Duffy FM, isn't it?" Duffy notes. "I tried to sell advertising in the spaces inbetween but that particular campaign fell through."

We are sitting in a dim Camden restaurant and Duffy's suddenly become self-conscious: he's pulled his polo neck up over his nose, and all that can be seen is a huge pair of bush-baby eyes and a shock of rain-spiked hair. As you can see, the talk is mainly of the past: *I Love My Friends* is, rather like John Barry's new album, musical autobiography. Two of the songs start "I was born"; ex-lovers are apologised to; and recent deaths — of his first girlfriend and of his father — explain the wilder, tearful rasp to his voice.

"Eeww, well, I had therapy," he says from within his jumper. "When my father died, I went straight into recording *Duffy* and I was still in shock. *Therapy's* been very useful in acknowledging stuff. It's weird," he continues, "how this fear has built up that therapy cures your messed-upness; cures the illness that makes you an artist. I don't think being afflicted makes you an artist and if it does," he says, the rest of his head suddenly emerging from his jumper, a boyish margin around a huge beam, "then I'm still ill."

I Love My Friends is out on Cooking Vinyl now



Saved by therapy and a trip to Jamaica: "I don't think being afflicted makes you an artist but if it does, I'm still ill," says Stephen Duffy

LIVE GIGS: Paris hails the return of the legendary (yes, really) Dick Rivers, while Wyclef Jean of the Fugees steps into the solo spotlight

FRENCH anti-Americanism has been greatly exaggerated, to judge by the triumphant comeback concerts of Dick Rivers, a singer whose entire career celebrates Americana. However much Gallie "intellos" rally against Yankee cultural imperialism, the French working class has long adored all aspects of American popular culture, especially its fundamental musics such as R&B, rock'n'roll and country and western.

These are all the Rivers freedom, and his *fidèles* are one of the last genuinely proletarian audiences in rock. Among those who gathered

M. pompadour



Dick Rivers Casinò de Paris

for three nights of Rivers there were no college slackers, no cultural theorists doing pop doctorates, no slumming avant-garde composers. These were the people for and by whom such music was invented, working-class rebels who had it to themselves until the mid-1960s. And a frightening lot they were, now middle-

aged or worse, still sheathed in leather, bootlace ties and sideburns, raw examples of that sartorial classic, the Frenchman in cowboy boots.

The man himself appeared to a slow heartbeat rhythm, silhouetted in a blinding light, the original Man in Black. Quiff and DA magnificently resistant to the decades, he looked superb.

The crowd exploded into jiving as he kicked into *C'est Dommage*, the voice as delicately rich as ever, deep

enough to make seats tremble. The journalistic cliché "legend" was coined for the likes of Rivers, a founding (grand)father of pop music for more than 35 years, adored by country connoisseurs as well as Paul McCartney.

Born on the Côte d'Azur, Rivers began touring as a teenager, formed the notorious Chats Sauvages at 15, sold two million copies of *Twist à Saint-Tropez* and, as a solo artist, supported everyone from the Beach Boys to Gene Vincent.

If he spends much of his time in Texas these days, Rivers still sings almost entirely in French. It can be disconcerting to hear Gallie versions of *In the Ghetto* or *Blue Bayou* with the phrasing, timing and sheer muscularity of timbre reconnect the pop magic. To quote his only song in English, Rivers will *Not Fade Away*.

ADRIAN DANNATT

WYCLEF JEAN is the main man with the Fugees and an adventurous musical spirit who has embarked on a series of collaborations and other projects away from the band. Last year's solo album, *The Carnival*, was a restlessly creative affair featuring an eclectic fusion of hip hop, disco, rap, reggae and even classical music.

This live show with the loose posse of friends he calls the Refugee Allstars attempted to repeat the mix, a totally bewildering array of samples and beats which was the musical equivalent of television channel-hopping. It was as if Jean's furious creativity left him bored with anything lasting longer than a minute as soon as he got a groove going it was abandoned amid shouts of "Remix, remix" and he struck out in a fresh direction or launched into a new rap.

The effect was physically

I've started, but I won't finish

Wyclef Jean Astoria, W1

draining, as was the relentless testosterone-charged energy onstage, which involved not only the obligatory shouting and waving of any rap show but also an astonishing double back flip by Jean which probably would have scored 8.5 at the Olympics. At times it was more like being at the circus than a music event.

The show began with a version of *No Woman No Cry* played more or less straight before Jean was joined by fellow rappers Pras Michel, his colleague in the Fugees,

and John Forte. The three were an intimidating physical presence but there were moments of gentleness, too. *Anything Can Happen* displayed considerable wit and a version of *Guantanamo* was simply gorgeous. Also impressive was *Gone Till November*, almost a conventional pop song and the new single. Halfway through Jean was joined by Caribus, currently the hottest young rapper in New York. For a lengthy unaccompanied duet which chronicled contemporary black American urban life. Full of expletives and references to Puerto Rican construction workers, smoking crack and Eddie Murphy.

there was an undeniably powerful street poetry about it and an intelligence sadly absent from the work of so many of the gangsta rappers.

Later Jean invited members of a local London rap crew to join him and Brooklyn gave way to Brixton. He was also joined by Beenie Man, one of Jamaica's top stars, who delivered a heavy and uncompromising slice of dancehall reggae and a paean to marijuana.

Towards the end there was a fine version of the Fugees' *Vocab* before Jean decided it was time to change the dial again. After an hour and 40 minutes the end was so sudden that for a moment some of us thought someone must have pulled the plug. There was no encore but by then we were all utterly exhausted anyway.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

Shock jocks unstrap it all

COMEDY

Jerry Sadowitz Criterion

It is deeply unlikely that anyone would slip into Jerry Sadowitz's *Bib and Bob* show by accident, although the possibility of the odd brandy-soaked old gent tumbling in from Marco Pierre White's adjoining restaurant could make for some interesting misunderstandings. It is billed as "wildly offensive", and most punters surely hand over their cash for the pleasure of being shocked silly.

Of course it would be churlish of Sadowitz and Logan Murray not to oblige. Almost every possible taboo is broached, from paedophilia to the deaths of Linda McCartney and the Princess of Wales. Sadowitz disintegrates into spittle-soaked attacks on a plethora of unmentionably sensitive subjects, and Murray, with his flies perpetually at half mast, is happy to portray every reeking perversity from here to Oban.

The jokes are unprintable, and the scenarios, for the most part, indescribable. But when it works it is blisteringly funny; both comedians seem to operate better as a double act than they do solo.

Away from the rawer edges of the fringe, the craving for a fat TV contract has made much stand-up anodyne and commercial. It is a pleasure to watch a pair of comedians who are prepared to exploit the less censored medium of live performance, although realistically the most offensive spectacle of the evening is the sight of Sadowitz quivering

though undeveloped, ideas. What makes it all oddly unshocking is the fact that these two are so blatantly out to shock; their comments are meant to unsettle, not reinforce shared prejudices.

This is thoughtful, intelligent entertainment for the chronically disturbed. Television may be out of the question, but since Oliver Stone was in the audience the night I went, the phantom possibility of *Bib and Bob. The Movie* could provide entertainment for the British Board of Film Classification for years to come.

HETTIE JUDAH

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(eastwest/Atlantic 7567-83095
£15.49)

LIKE the march of the seasons come: another year, another personal crisis, another Tori Amos album. Last time it was the break-up of her relationship with producer Eric Rosse ("I've dragged my boyfriend's balls halfway across Europe", she declared at the time of *Boys for Pele*, which sounded about as much fun for him as that album was for the rest of us). This time she is preoccupied with the miscarriage which she suffered three months into her pregnancy in 1997, an event which haunts the songs on *from the choirgirl hotel* like a spectre at the feast.

One particular problem with a trauma of this kind is that there is no one else to blame. As always, Amos's lyrics tend towards the opaque, but in the odd moments of lucidity the mood of self-recrimination, however illogical, is strong. "She's convinced she could hold back a glacier/But she couldn't keep baby alive", she sings on *Spark*, a song with unusually pretty harmonies but a cruelly sad tone.

At times her songs float past like rudderless ships in a high sea. *Hotel*, with its stream-of-consciousness lyric, disorientating time changes and dislocated, caterwauling melody, conjures little more than a vague sense of neurotic unease. But a conventional backing band is on hand to augment her chilly soprano

NEW POP ALBUMS

and grumbling piano parts on most tracks, and increasingly her resources to imbue songs such as *Playboy Mommy* and *Liquid Diamonds* with greater melodic order and a purposeful gallop.

It may not be an easy collection to like but, as she puts it herself in *Cruel*, Amos is definitely "Top Ten in the charts of pain". You just hope she doesn't have to climb any higher before her next record is due.

SAINT ETIENNE

Good Humor
(Creation CRECD 225 £15.99)
WHERE Tori Amos's album is all messy substance, Saint Etienne's *Good Humor* is pure style. Like a pair of Gucci loafers, the trio's upmarket brand of cosmopolitan pop is smart, suave and instantly comfortable, if not exactly the most robust sound to be found on the streets in the spring of 1998.

That said, they have toughened up noticeably since their album of four years ago, *Tiger Bay*, and, instead of the fluffy generic synth arrangements, we now find grainy, beatbox rhythm tracks on *Woodcabin* and *Been so Long*, a salty brass section on *Split Seven* and lots of 1970s-sounding

electric piano on just about everything.

With her blonde, coe-hiher voice, so befitting her status as the most photogenic woman in pop, Sarah Cracknell sings about driving her Capri, arriving at airports, checking out "the Amsterdam scene" and waking up on a fogbound morning with a sensual charm that pre-empt any sterner critique.

It won't change the world, but *Good Humor* is an elegant if superficial pleasure, best taken in the undemanding spirit in which it is offered.

FRANK BLACK AND THE CATHOLICS

Frank Black and the Catholics
(Play It Again Sam BIAS 370 CD £14.99)
WHILE pop and dance music have flourished in the 1990s, rock has become an endangered genre since the death of Kurt Cobain. Witness the plight of Frank Black who, after three superb solo albums, is still routinely referred to as the former frontman of the Pixies, and struggled to find a record company willing to release *Frank Black and the Catholics*.

Recorded live in the studio, with a basic two guitars-bass-and-drums line-up, it is a

sensational album driven by the energy of late-1980s American punk, but informed by a wealth of sophisticated musical detail.

From the heavy riffing of *Solid Gold* to the more reflective approach of *Dog Gone*, this record bristles with great tunes, smart ideas and all-round musical inventiveness. That it still sounds so old-fashioned underlines the fact that very few musicians with Black's wit and ingenuity choose nowadays to operate in the traditional rock idiom, and this is one of those albums that has got everything going for it except timing.

As Black admits himself on the rather wistful closing track: "I was the man who was too loud".

MONKEY MAFIA

Shoot the Boss
(Heavenly HVNLP2ICD £15.49)
THE brainchild of London-born DJ and Heavenly Social alumnus Jon Carter, Monkey Mafia is a loosely organised collective whose trick is to marry the sounds of ragga to the modern dancefloor muscle of big beat.

At their most energetic, as on *Blow the Whole Joint Up* and *I am Fresh*, they sound like a Jamaican version of the Chemical Brothers, mixing heavy breakbeats and car siren drones with swirling dub interludes and the tongue-twisting, rasta-rap vocalise of Douge Reuben.

The album loses its way somewhat when it meanders into the murky dub/trip hop realms of *Ward 10* and *Metro Love*. But a soulful version of John Fogerty's *Long as I can See the Light* provides a lovely, languorous finish to *Shoot the Boss*.

DAVID SINCLAIR



Anyone wanting to get up to speed with Tori Amos's latest trauma could do no better than check out her latest album

David Sinclair exposes Nick Cave, legendary god of hellfire, as a concerned and loving parent

Cool goth of the old school

Music journalists get to see a side of the artists they write about that is different from the stage persona. But the picture we get is invariably just as stage-managed as any other part of their act. In the case of Nick Cave, there is the performer of popular myth: the dark, gothic overlord who has strode through many calamitous situations, often of his own making, armed with a deep, booming voice and a repertoire that extends from extremes of comic-book violence to the most achingly gentle lullabies. Both elements combined to produce his biggest hit, *Where the Wild Roses Grow*, a duet with Kylie Minogue.

Faced with a journalist, Cave affects a suspicious disdain for the process of being interviewed, thinks hard before speaking and takes great pains to avoid becoming entangled in an awkward attempt to explain the unexplainable. The truth is there in his music and his art: the interview is at best a promotional chore.

But Luke, Cave's six-year-old son, coincidentally attends the same school as do my children, and I get to observe Cave in a rather different light. Anyone who has seen him

arette as he approaches the school gates, rifling through a pile of games kit in search of a missing sock, cheering on his son at the swimming gala and joining in the singing at the nativity concert, would find it hard to hang on to the impression of Cave as a figure of sinister repute from the underworld of rock'n'roll.

Cave, who lives separately from Luke's mother, Viviane Carneiro, a Brazilian fashion stylist and art director, prides himself on being a conscientious father. "Luke lives with me for three or four days a week, and those days I give over to him. The rest of the time I work," he says.

Fatherhood has had a profound impact on Cave. On a practical level, it has curbed the wanderlust that has led the 40-year-old Australian expatriate to live for extended periods in Berlin and São Paulo as well as London and Melbourne. He is reconciled to staying in London for now. "I've actually grown to quite like English people," he says with the merest hint of a raised eyebrow. "One or two of them are even friends of mine."

Emotionally, fatherhood has led Cave to a deeper understanding of his own father, a teacher who died in a road accident when Nick was



Nick Cave: been there, done that and just about to release the greatest hits album

21. "I feel myself very much becoming like my father, despite all my attempts not to," Cave says. "I'm constantly doing things and thinking this is what my father would have done. It's allowed me to understand, forgive and love my father much more."

Cave first came to London in 1980 when his then group, the Birthday Party, emigrated from Melbourne. Their first gig was a poorly attended affair at the Rock Garden, a basement dive in Covent Garden. This time last year, accompanied by the Bad Seeds, his long-standing cohorts, Cave played two consecutive nights at the Albert Hall. His odyssey has taken the raven-haired singer from the outermost fringes of cult notoriety to the brink of mainstream acceptance, but without ever compromising his artistic vision, a point emphasised by the release next week of *The Best of Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds*, a 16-track compilation of his work spanning the ten albums he has made since embarking on a solo career in 1984.

The album traces the development of Cave from delinquent, post-punk huckster into one of the finest writers of romantic ballads that the rock world has produced. From the raucous, hyper-tense drama of tracks such as *From Her To*

Eternity and *The Carny* to the soft, poignant emotion of *Into My Arms* and *(Are You) The One that I've Been Waiting For*, Cave demonstrates an ear for language as much as for melody, and an eye for narrative detail of which any writer would be proud.

As an album, it is not only a good representation of Cave's music but also a great introduction to it, and seems likely to propel him to a new level of success. But is there a danger that he might be drawing a line under the best work he will ever do?

"I continue to be surprised that I'm allowed to make music," he says. "I'm grateful that I am. But I feel more insecure now than when I wasn't making any money at all. About four years ago I started wondering when I was going to burn out, when everything was going to stop. But I've come to the conclusion that I'm a creative person and that's something that doesn't go away. As long as I don't abuse my gifts, then there shouldn't be any reason why I can't continue to make music as long as I want to."

Although aware of his good fortune, Cave conveys a fairly morose impression of himself in conversation, albeit leavened with a deadpan, black humour somewhat in the mould of Leonard Cohen. "I'm

always one to grab hold of the bad things that people say to me and cling on to them," Cave says.

A close friend of Michael Hutchence, he was deeply saddened by the Australian singer's death last year. "I don't think Michael intended to kill himself. I don't think he was suicidal. He wasn't that kind of character," Cave says.

Has he ever felt suicidal himself? "I've had those feelings at times, but I'm not the type. I find life difficult — I think everyone does. But I have things that protect me. Being able to articulate the way I feel is certainly one of them."

At present, Cave does not plan to have any more children. He is not even romantically linked ("I'm London's most eligible bachelor") and spends a surprising amount of time alone.

At the end of our time together, he leaps from his chair to greet a man who wants him to teach songwriting to students in Vienna, a prospect Cave clearly relishes. "I've always wanted to be a teacher," he says as he sweeps through the door, excitement in his voice for the first time.

• The Best of Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds is released on May 11. They play the LA2, London W1 (0171 434 0403) on May 10

CHARLIE HADEN and KENNY BARRON

Night and the City
(Verve 539 961-2)
DRAWN from three successive nights of music at the Iridium, New York, this album reunites two of jazz's most elegant stylists in a programme in which the most standard of standards — *For Heaven's Sake*, *Body and Soul* and *The Very Thought of You* among them — are lovingly examined. A couple of originals, Kenny Barron's tender *Twilight Song* and Charlie Haden's plangent *Waltz for Ruth*, also feature.

Barron has a faultless track record in refined post-bop jazz, playing mellifluous but consistently inventive piano; while Haden possesses one of the fullest, most softly persuasive and sensuous bass sounds

A pair of aces win it

JAZZ ALBUMS

in the music. So theirs is a delightfully felicitous pairing, producing 70 minutes of exemplary modern mainstream jazz — cultured, poised, superbly atmospheric, yet surprisingly vigorous where necessary.

KEITH TIPPETT
Friday the Thirteenth
(NRL Records NRL-10001)
RECORDED in Sendai, Ja-

pan, on June 13 1997, this CD captures an archetypal solo performance by one of the world's greatest freely improvising pianists. All Keith Tippett's stylistic trademarks — the patient, dramatic build-up from rumbling, resonating low-register beginnings to a thunderous climax; the textural variety obtained by placing "foreign" objects inside the piano; the tender, lyrical passages interspersed with vigorous, exhilarating high-note runs; the softly lifting ending fading to gentle percussion — are in evidence in this near 50-minute improvisation.

Tippett's extraordinary solo performances are best experienced live, but this recording is an excellent substitute for the real thing.

CHRIS PARKER

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DES JENSON

LONDON

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA: Violin virtuoso Joshua Bell joins the orchestra under Mark Wigglesworth in a performance of Beethoven's Violin Concerto...

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Merril Hargill. Debut Symphony Orchestra under Neeme Järvi which repeats the programme of Copland, Prokofiev and Schostakovich performed in Manchester...

LONDON GALLERIES

Design Museum: Bosch - 100 years of innovation (0171-378 6055). Dulwich: In the Age of Turner (0181-852 5254). Hayward: The Great Kapoor (0171-928 3144).



Roger Scruton premieres his first opera in Oxford

THEATRE GUIDE

Jersey Kingdon's assessment of theatre in London. House of Commons, 30. Some seats available. Seats at all prices.

LONG RUNNERS

Blackly: Grand (0171-690 8900). The Cuckoo's Nest (0171-434 0072). An Inspector Calls (0171-494 5000).

NEW RELEASES

BREAKDOWN (15): Kurt Russell and wife crossing the States by car, but prey to economic in the desert. Tense thriller with J. T. Walsh. Director: Jonathan Demme.

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and where to watch them. The symbol * on release across the country.



Lynda La Plante: "One of the reasons why I walked away from Prime Suspect was that they wanted to focus on Jane Tennison's private life"

Netting a prime suspect

Lynda La Plante was so scared by what she saw on the Internet that she wrote a TV series. Carol Allen reports

There are comparatively few women who simultaneously admit to being "around 50" and look good in tight leather pants. Lynda La Plante is one of them. A petite powerhouse of words and energy, she has auburn hair and large blue eyes which frequently crinkle into mischievous laughter...

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Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, partially cut off, featuring the name 'Mary' and 'A sad Ad to all the'.

كنا من الأصل

media times

Mary Bell and the shaming of the tabloid editors

I was closely involved with Peter Stothard, the Editor of *The Times*, in negotiating the serialisation of *Cries Unheard*. So I write with passion about the subject that is obsessing some of the national tabloids.

I have worked with Gitta Sereny in the past and admire her as a writer and journalist of the utmost seriousness and integrity. I read *Cries Unheard* in one evening and had no moral qualms whatsoever about recommending that it should be serialised in *The Times*. There were two main reasons.

One is that Mary Bell committed her crimes 30 years ago and has paid her price to society. It has been a high price. She suffered years of often appalling treatment in England's prisons and a subsequent life in hiding, often on the run with the ever-present fear of her real identity being revealed. Surely, said one of Britain's most respected publishers, a practising Roman Catholic, as we discussed Macmillan's decision to publish, Christians believe in redemption?

It is a thought that Tony Blair, Jack Straw and the editors who have exploited populist passions and, inflamed a deeply sensitive situation should consider before they rush to judgment on a book they haven't read and a woman they haven't met. As her literary agent Hilary Rubinstein wrote in *The Times*, Mary Bell is now a

decent woman who has had no favours from society but who has picked herself up, confessed her sin and become a good mother. Has she not now redeemed herself?

The second is that nobody who reads this book can finish it without gaining sobering insights into what makes a child a killer. Sereny reveals that Mary Bell was so brutalised by her life as a child that she did not know what was right and what was wrong until she went to a Special Unit and came under the care of James Dixon, the only officer of the State who showed any understanding of her plight and how to rescue her.

As *The Guardian* recognised yesterday, Mary Bell did not kill because she was evil but because she was badly and brutally damaged by her sado-masochist mother and the men who visited her. *Cries Unheard* is emotionally searing reading and is therefore — to answer a specious leading article in *The Independent* yesterday — unlikely significantly to boost sales.

But it is the job of serious journalism to throw light on the dark corners of our society and to show that many more children than middle-class journalists can comprehend obviously live in constant fear. That is what some of us see as the job of journalism, a job that has been all but sacrificed by most modern tabloid editors.

If it had not been for two malicious tip-offs, one setting a



Overreaction: the tabloids exploit populist passion, inflaming an already sensitive situation

score with Sereny, which alerted *The Observer* (to the book) and *The Guardian* (to the payment of money), the serialisation would not have started until tomorrow. The mothers of the dead children would have been told about the book by Sereny instead of reporters, Mary Bell would not be under police protection and her 14-year-old daughter would not yet know her mother's terrible secret — at least not in this pitiless fashion.

For there can be no doubt that the old-fashioned, knee-jerk reactions of most tabloid editors would have been the same, only later. Even so, Mary Bell's daughter could by then have been protected. Yet there is no mercy in a tabloid newsroom. So the tabloid pack set out to track down the

"child monster" and to destroy her cover. They succeeded only too well, raising questions about whether all the methods used were legal. There are certainly strong suspicions that Sereny's phone has been monitored.

By Monday, the *Daily Mail* had found Norma Bell, the child who had stood beside Mary Bell in the dock but who was acquitted. She was "livid". Was that, I wonder, because she was asked if she was "livid". A *Sun* headline said: "Shun this evil book." Yet nowhere in the *Sun* report was the book described as evil. That was a headline writer's invention; the book is in no way evil.

By Wednesday, *The Sun* had found Mary Bell's seaside hideout. After 18 years, her greatest nightmare suddenly began to come real

as a press pack gathered outside. Her daughter started asking questions. Sussex police were forced to move her into hiding, and within hours her daughter discovered her mother's secret and in the most inhumane circumstances.

The Sun also published an open letter to Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, from Eileen Corrigan and June Richardson, the mothers of the two children she killed, about the money Sereny paid to Mary Bell. Did they think of that stratagem for themselves?

The Daily Mail also discovered a "new outrage" when Sereny sent a letter to June Richardson attempting to explain why she had paid Mary Bell. This was a courtesy. What was Sereny supposed to do? Ought she not to have written? Meanwhile, the *Mail* devoted two

columns to lifting the first days' serial from *The Times*.

Comment has also intruded into reporting. Yesterday the *Daily Mail* report of *The Times* serial described Sereny's observations as "extraordinary" and "self-serving", adding, without checking, that *The Times* had paid a "reported £70,000" for the rights — a sum which was way over the top.

As it tried to find a writer to knock Sereny's book, the *Mail* also hired its favourite consultant psychiatrist Raj Persaud, who has not read it, and gave him almost a full page to describe Bell as The Manipulator. *The Express* argued that Sereny's book was redundant — psychiatrists had already analysed Bell's mind. Yet Sereny convincingly demonstrates that Mary Bell had almost no psychiatric treatment.

Playing to the gallery, both Blair and Jack Straw inflamed the situation, Blair by describing the payment as "repugnant", and Straw by replying in *The Sun* to Richardson and Corrigan, and thereby offering to sanction tabloid behaviour. Blair had spoken for us "all", said *The Sun* — whose You the Jury poll had shown that a surprisingly high minority of 1,329 *Sun* readers thought Bell should keep her money, against 8,906 who thought she should give it back.

Editors have been obsessed with Sereny's payment of money to Mary Bell. That is because she is an honest woman who tells the truth.

Many authors would have fudged the question, or lied. One effect of the payment, which ought to be applauded, will be to make Bell less dependent on state payouts. So why are newspapers still peddling the sum of £50,000 which Sereny has repeatedly denied?

On two occasions last month — the other was the case of paedophile Sidney Cooke — some tabloid editors were guilty of so manufacturing outrage and inflaming a news story that they created lynch mobs. It is not the fault of Gitta Sereny, Macmillan or *The Times* that Mary Bell's life has once again been ruined or that a 14-year-old girl is now aware that her mother was one of Britain's most notorious killers. It was the fault of the tabloid editors who have mercilessly hounded her.

It need not have happened and there were many journalists around me yesterday, especially the youngest, who were ashamed of their trade. But they come from a more compassionate generation. None of the staff who has worked on *The Times* serial has a guilty conscience. It was not *The Times* but *The Guardian* which said yesterday: "Child killers can be rehabilitated. Mary Bell... has posed no threat since her release 18 years ago. The tabloids should be ordered to call off their hounds."

BRIAN MACARTHUR

A sad Addios to all that

RICHARD ADDIS, the newly departed Editor of *The Express*, is deeply pessimistic about continuing with a career in newspapers, after his mauling at the hands of Lord Hollick.

He says: "They're exciting when you're young. I don't know whether I want to slog away for a proprietor again when your star can go up and down like this. I might seek a complete change."

With a two-year payoff approaching £400,000, he has no need to rush. But canny Hollick is insisting on paying 41-year-old Addis off bit by bit, rather than with a lump sum.

STEPHEN GRABINER made his first public appearance this week as the new chief executive of British Digital Broadcasting (BDB), the Carlton/Granada joint venture that is launching 30 channels of television later this year.

At an otherwise tense conference to debate the big leap forward — which pitches BDB against BSkyB — he looked notably tanned and cheerful, after winning a four-month fight to extricate himself from Lord Hollick's United News and Media tentacles to take up a new position.

Having made his name in the 1980s by repositioning *The Daily Telegraph* and then attempting to stem the circulation decline of the two *Express* titles, the appointment of Rosie Boycott strikes him as very surprising. Grabiner's current duty is to present BDB shareholders and Carlton chairman Michael Green with a new consumer-friendly name for BDB, to build the brand from scratch. The only certainty is that the letter B is completely out of favour. Choice TV may get the nod.

ITV's barons let it be known this week that they have no intention of putting their channel, or the new sports and entertainment ITV2, on to the forthcoming digital satellite platform being launched by Sky this June, insisting their services will be used to drive the spread of digital terrestrial television, broadcast to current aerials.

Channel 4 is also standing aside, keeping its proposed new subscription film and racing channel off the satellite, too. This means that the BBC is alone among the current players in taking the digital satellite plunge and negotiating to pay for the privilege. It is a policy move enraging ITV.

MICHAEL BRUNSON, ITN's distinctive political editor, is campaigning openly against ITV's proposals to scrap *News at Ten*, speaking with the backing of his editor at a

lecture to the European Media Forum on Tuesday. He said: "I do not at any time, but particularly at a time of so much political activity, wish to see the BBC have a monopoly of news reporting for most of the traditional viewing evening." Without *News at Ten*, prime-time ITV would resemble LWT on Sunday night, he thundered — lots of drama but no substance... and no Brunson.

TO lunch with David Liddiment, the ITV network director responsible for improving ratings. He is keen to emphasise his innovations include a new consumer programme, a game show with a £1 million prize, and lots more "talking point" television. For example? Well, two months ago ITV ran an animal programme, *The World's Ten Deadliest Snakes*, which showed naturalist Steve Irwin being licked on his cheek by a venomous serpent. And next? *The World's Ten Deadliest Crocodiles*.

THE Foreign Secretary's PR advisers have clearly failed to give the new Mrs Cook a key piece of advice. Smile and the world smiles with you. Why does Gaynor Cook continue to face the cameras with downcast eyes, like a guilty mistress, rather than a happy new wife?

THE issue of whether television journalists are given the time to check when covering huge foreign events was tackled this week at the Voice of the Listener and Viewer consumer watchdog.

Nick Pollard, the head of Sky News, and Richard Tait, the editor in chief of ITN, acknowledged that it was pointless to send journalists into the field if the pressure to be first with news forced them to conduct instant two-way live interviews from their hotel the moment they got there.

The conference was told that all too often London-based staff have to coach the newly arrived correspondent with agency copy from the newsroom. The issue, which is also greatly alarming aid agencies, is to be fully debated at a conference. Dispatches from Disaster Zones, backed by them later this month.

NICK POLLARD also acknowledged at the Voice of the Listener and Viewer conference that a live 24-hour news channel did run the risk of spreading inaccurate information. One of his journalists had suggested they adopt the motto: "Not Wrong for Long."



Lord Hollick: the trademark black beard is flecked with grey, but he still has a younger man's relish to challenge the *Daily Mail's* dominance of the middle market

The way Lord Hollick, the chief executive of United News and Media, talks about Richard Addis, the man he fired as editor of *The Express* last week, you would think he was putting him forward for Editor of the Year award.

"I am pleased with the progress *The Express* has made. Richard did an outstanding job. He joined shortly before I came on board, but I immediately struck up a good relationship with him and he has steered the ship. The paper was in long-term decline. He has modernised it. He carried through some fairly far-reaching restructuring and moved to the seven-day model," says Hollick, who is obviously sincere about what amounts to a generous funeral oration.

Then Clive Hollick, the matter-of-fact businessman, kicks in. "The challenge now is to move forward. We needed a change of pace. A change of gears was the expression I used," he says by way of explanation of why Addis — hired by the United chairman, Lord Stevens, from the *Daily Mail* after he heard him recommended at a dinner party — had to go.

Though *Express* editors have come and gone over the years, it is still extraordinary that the paper that once wielded the Crusader sword of Lord Beaverbrook should now be edited by Rosie Boycott, founder of *Spare Rib*, the feminist magazine, and campaigner for the legalisation of cannabis when she edited *The Independent* on Sunday.

"I think we need more passion, we need someone who has got more of a popular touch who can sniff the Zeitgeist," says Hollick, before instantly realising what he has said. "Sniff is probably not the right verb — capture the Zeitgeist."

Can Rosie sniff out the Zeitgeist?

As the door closes on yet another *Express* editor, Lord Hollick tells Ray Snoddy how he plans to redefine the newspaper middle market

The United chief executive has high hopes for Boycott. She is going to be his main weapon in the old task of trying to close the ever-widening gap with the *Daily Mail*.

Hollick, the quintessential New Labour peer, has been watching Boycott for some time and decided that she was the one who was "absolutely the best person" to redefine the middle market in newspapers, rather than Labour did in politics.

"What we have is a market currently defined by a brilliantly successful 1980s model. We now need a model for the millennium," says Hollick, while conceding that there is still a lot of momentum behind the successful Eighties model, the *Daily Mail*. He does, however, see the *Mail's* "slavish" support for the Conservatives as a real weakness.

As to how the marketplace is going to be redefined — that is what Rosie Boycott is being paid for. He believes a good start has been made in making *The Express* more appealing to younger readers, with its sports section, a Monday section for enterprise and the self-employed and improved business pages.

Boycott will also inherit at *The Express* the only full-time drugs correspondent in the

national press. "That was one of my ideas that Richard did take up," says Hollick, who deflects questions about whether the cannabis legalisation campaign will take root at *The Express* by saying, like Bill Clinton, "I never inhaled."

It is clear that *The Express* is planning very significant investment over the next 12 months in both editorial and marketing. Amanda Platell, a former senior *Mirror* executive, is working on plans for part-work, and the possibility of a price war directed at the *Daily Mail* should not be ruled out.

Hollick, a former merchant banker, once almost became an editor himself. At Nottingham University he was offered the editorship of the student paper, but turned it down because the president of the students' union wanted to ensure that the campaign run by the previous editor against the union would not continue.

"I came across proprietorial influence at a tender age and decided I was not prepared to take on the editorship under

those circumstances," says Hollick, who insists that nowadays when he is the boss — if not actually the proprietor — he merely puts forward ideas which are politely listened to rather than necessarily acted upon.

But the most interesting question about 52-year-old Hollick — and one that sets him apart from his generation — is how the son of a Southampton French polisher, who joined the Labour Party at 15 and who as a member of CND marched against the bomb (even if he didn't inhale), and who as a student was president of the dramatic society and fired with journalism, should decide to choose the world of the City.

The answer comes from "a wise man" whose name Clive Hollick can no longer remember — the godfather of a former girlfriend. He said that the City was just beginning to change and was starting to become more democratic. It was also a place where a young man could get a lot of responsibility at an early age. But there was an expression

which has stuck. "He told me that quite contrary to what you see from the outside the business process itself is a highly creative one and therefore if you feel you have got some creative juices, then you shouldn't just look in the obvious direction. I decided to look around. I joined Hambro (the merchant bank) and the rest is history."

Hollick got his peerage partly because he was Tony Blair's unofficial ambassador to the City, and partly for his work at the Labour-leaning think-tank, the Institute for Public Policy Research. From his years in the City there is a toughness and financial discipline which still manifests itself in what some have seen as an unhealthy interest in journalists' expenses. He even closed the bar down in the *Express* building. Hollick can also be straightforward to the point of bluntness and will hunt down journalists who have got it wrong to give them a tongue-lashing.

It is not a good idea to break into his "sacrosanct" weekends at his New Forest country home unless it is really urgent. But after building up MAI as a television company, it was definitely creative to merge with the old world of print in the shape of United and Lord Stevens, the Tory peer who remains non-executive chairman.

Now that he is enjoying growing success, and his dark beard is becoming flecked with grey, Hollick seems more relaxed, less prickly and he smiles a lot — even though some of those smiles can still be a shade wintry. Naturally, he is fascinated by all things on-line — the Internet, transaction services, electronic curriculum material for schools, digital terrestrial television — and United is in all of them, but with a fair degree of practicality and caution.

He sees *The Express* as the cross-promotion engine of the new media. "That is tremendously important. You can have these goddam services but if nobody knows they are there, they just float about," he says.

As well as trying to revitalise *The Express* — and with Gerry Robinson of Granada and Michael Green of Carlton being one of the big three in ITV — Hollick sneaks off to a secret life every evening as a special advisor to Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade. There are committees on investment in industry to chair, and advice needed on everything from the Competition Bill and reorganising the European aerospace industry, to fairness at work and the minimum wage.

Would he ever consider entering Government itself, say in a second Blair term, when he had discharged his commitment to United? "I made a commitment to stay here and see it through," he says. Then he adds in a comment that leaves the possibility of a new career open: "I quipped at the time of the merger I certainly have enough to keep me busy here until Tony Blair's second Administration." Or until the year 2001.

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media times

Tunku Varadarajan reports on the case of an Internet investigator who has challenged America's Constitution

LARRY MATTHEWS, a 54-year-old father of four, is in trouble. Charged with receiving and sending child pornography over the Internet, he goes on trial next month in Washington and, if convicted, could spend up to 15 years in jail.

But he has some very vocal friends. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has described his prosecution as unconscionable. So have the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, the Radio-Television News Directors Association and the National Public Radio.

Matthews is a freelance journalist and his case has become a battle over the American Constitution's First Amend-

Can free speech include child porn?

ment, which guarantees the right of free speech, and the boundaries of investigative journalism on the Internet.

Matthews does not deny that he entered "chat rooms" frequented by paedophiles or that he received and sent images of naked children. He insists, however, that he did so only as part of his journalistic research into child pornography on the Internet. He contends that the only way to get traffickers in child porn to discuss their trade with

him was to win their confidence. That was why, he says, he had to exchange pictures with them.

In an *amicus curiae* brief, the ACLU says: "Matthews claims protection not for the content of the images... but for the activity of news-gathering. The protection afforded to the latter under the First Amendment is as broad as the protection afforded to the former is narrow."

Prosecutors, however, dismiss Mat-

thews's arguments, claiming that trafficking in child porn is an offence of strict liability, and that motive is irrelevant. Once a picture is sent or received, a crime is committed. The case, they argue, has nothing to do with the First Amendment. It is about prurience and crime.

They have also attacked Matthews's journalistic explanation by drawing parallels between researches into pornography and the drug trade. In their docket they

say: "A reporter investigating the crack trade cannot go in to a drug market and buy crack cocaine himself. Nor can he decide to sell crack cocaine in order to develop information to write his story."

Matthews contends that his bona fides should not be open to question because he has already written a series on Internet child porn for the radio that was broadcast on a local station in 1995. He also points out that, during the research that led to his arrest, he had gone to the police to alert them to a man selling his own daughters for sex. A man trafficking in pornography, he contends, would not so obviously have drawn attention to himself.

The bills that are meant to confuse

Watchdogs are to act on the scandal of confusion pricing

Trading standards officers and consumer watchdogs, including Ofstet and the Advertising Standards Authority, are becoming more and more concerned that many advertisements for mobile phone companies, finance houses and utilities firms are potentially misleading and unintelligible to most consumers.

In many cases, they say, the bewildering range of special discounts, short-term offers and one-off tariffs flooding the market make it impossible to determine just which company is the cheapest.

But is this deliberate? According to one trading standards officer, some advertisers may be using a technique known as "confusion pricing" to stop consumers making like-for-like comparisons.

Tony Northcott, who heads the fair trading committee of the Institute of Trading Standards (ITSA), says that confusion-pricing leaves consumers punch-drunk as they try to calculate the best mortgage offer or the cheapest mobile phone company. The result, he says, may be to persuade consumers to stay with their bank or gas company, even though the deal on offer is less attractive than a new player's.

Developed by established firms in the American telecoms market to frustrate new competition, confusion-pricing places the promotion of cheap and limited special offers at the centre of a company's marketing strategy, while hiding the true cost in body copy which they believe no one will read. Another technique is to conceal the true cost in "comparison tables" which, Northcott claims, would baffle a professional mathematician.

While they may appear initially attractive, it may be impossible to disprove such claims as "We guarantee to slash your average phone bill next quarter" or "Our offer is 10 per cent cheaper than any other multifuel deal".

Talk Radio finds its true voice



Paul Robinson arrived at Talk Radio's low point two years ago. "We are serving an audience who wouldn't dream of listening to BBC speech radio — too Establishment, too boring, too middle class," he says

Today only one national radio network will mark the first anniversary of Labour's landslide electoral victory. It's doing it with three hours of special programmes, including a detailed documentary on what life has been like for the Tory MPs swept away in the deluge.

Next week the same radio network will hear the outcome of its four Sony Award nominations, including a nomination for Station of the Year.

The network in question is Talk Radio, the national commercial speech station launched three years ago with the ill-conceived introduction of "shock jocks" from America and the brief reign of Caesar the Geezer. Within two years the station was almost driven into the ground.



New faces... and new listeners: audience figures have grown since Danny Baker and Kirsty Young joined the station

Two years ago Talk Radio was on the brink of disaster — now it is breaking audience records. Ray Snoddy reports on a remarkable renaissance

"We have got all the preview columns on this radio station for that event [the election anniversary]. It's extraordinary really that the BBC didn't think to do it," says Paul Robinson, the managing director, who arrived at Talk Radio's low point two years ago from a job as head of strategy and development at BBC Radio under the then managing director Liz Forgan.

The tall, fast-talking Robinson is a natural sciences graduate from Cambridge who worked for Air Products, an industrial gas company, before breaking into commercial radio in the North East by working as a disc jockey in the

evenings. Yesterday he was able to celebrate Talk Radio's highest official listening figures — a 473,000 year-on-year rise to 2.3 million regular listeners a week. Since his arrival, Robinson has got most of Talk Radio's numbers going in the right direction.

The percentage of adults aged between 25 and 54 who have ever listened has risen from 16 per cent in August, 1996 to 25 per cent in March, 1998.

Presenters who have been brought in include Kirsty Young, Danny Baker, and Lorraine Kelly. Indeed, Danny Baker has, says

Robinson, increased his audience in the Saturday evening sports slot by 40 per cent and drawn listeners away from David Mellor on the BBC's Radio 5 Live.

The station soon hopes to add Premier League football to the National League games it covers now.

Robinson says he already has a strong case to put to advertisers because of the pattern of Talk UK listeners. "One third listen to no other commercial radio and two thirds listen to no other national commercial station."

The audience is predominantly

"thirtysomethings" and evenly spread throughout the UK. "We are serving an audience who wouldn't dream of listening to BBC speech radio — too Establishment, too boring, too middle class, too southern," says Robinson, who was brought up in leafy Surrey. Revenues are expected to get close to £10 million this year, although profitability is unlikely to come until 2000.

For Talk Radio, the final irony is that just as things have started to go well its main shareholder, CTL-Üfa, the media group controlled by Bertelsmann, of Germany, has

decided to sell its "non-core interests", including its 62 per cent stake in the station.

The decision is mainly influenced by the need to invest more in its German pay-television ventures although a period of instability at Talk Radio is inevitable.

With considerable interest in the sale, which should value the company at anything from £45-50 million, three leading contenders can be identified. It is an opportunity for Associated Newspapers, publishers of the *Daily Mail*, to prove that it is serious about getting into commercial radio. It is also likely

that venture funds such as Apax Partners, which raised the money that allowed Chris Evans to buy Virgin Radio, will try to mount a management buyout. The situation is further complicated by the fact that Media Ventures International, which owns 36 per cent of the company, has the right to match any other offer.

Robinson declines to comment on the sale process, other than to acknowledge that "modest instability" is inevitable during the restructuring. "But I anticipate that the new investor will further drive the business forward, based on the platform we have established in the past two years," he says.

At the moment, the station is the fifth largest commercial station in the United Kingdom. Robinson believes that he can overtake the four ahead of him — Atlantic 282, Capital, Virgin and Classic — within the next two years.

"This is going to be the largest commercial station and the reason is that the market proposition supports that. The market gap is so large that we have only to achieve half our potential and we will achieve the status of largest commercial station," says Robinson.

Then his plan is to give Radio 5 Live a run for its money.

His former BBC bosses may yet come to regret that they turned Paul Robinson down for the controllers jobs of both Radio 1 and Radio 2.



TV pioneer: Bernie follows every movement of an actress

What makes Bernie such a lovely mover?

It's hard to take the buxom blonde purring off numbers in the Dutch accent on BBC's *National Lottery Big Ticket* as a feat of complex computing technology. But Bernie — short for Bernice — as she is known to her creators, is a relatively new kind of television cartooning.

This technology, known as real-time animation, simultaneously tracks and displays live-action movements in animated form. It evolved from motion-tracking technology created for American military use in the 1970s, but became simple and reliable enough for television only in the past decade.

Although real-time animation has appeared on TV in the past, it has now struck a chord — indeed, it has been the only successful part of the 50-minute game show, which was launched on March 28. Critics have charged that the show's commercial aspects breach the BBC's charter, and that its presentation is confusing.

All this, against a very public backdrop of the personal tribula-

Susan Karlin reveals the secrets of an animated blonde who has proved the only real hit of the Big Ticket lottery show

tions of the hostess, Anthea Turner. But Bernie has done well. And the show's producers, Tony Wolfe and Philip Kampff, have been inundated with calls about her.

"People are stunned by the fact that it's animation," says Kampff. "A lot of people have been ringing up asking 'How do you do that?' But not just the public. We have calls from people in the industry, too."

A handful of firms are pioneering similar technology, including SimGraphics Engineering and Protozoa, in California; Medialab SA, in Paris; Kaydara, in Montreal; and the Norwich-based Teletvital, which produces the technology for the BBC children's show *Salute Serge*.

The brains behind Bernie's body is Modern Cartoons, a two-year-old Los Angeles-based company in partnership with the Swedish

media conglomerate Kinnevik. AB, *National Lottery Big Ticket* is the company's latest in a list of shows on nearly every continent. In Britain, its technology appeared last year on the Channel 4 political satire *Rory Bremner, Who Else?*, which returns in the autumn.

Bernie comes to life when a real person (in this case the actress Katie Robbins) puts on a £180,000 body harness, gloves and boots, linked via cable to a computer which is itself connected to a monitor featuring the cartoon. Whenever Robbins speaks, blinks, dances around or waves her arms, so does Bernie.

The technology translates movement from several dozen body, optical, vocal, mechanical and magnetic motion sensors and recreates those movements on-screen in the form of an animated character. Facial movements are tracked through a head harness of cameras placed opposite reflective

sensors stuck to the actors' face, while a hand-held joystick enables effects such as pop-out eyes.

The BBC went with Modern Cartoons because of its attention to the character. Bernie is actually a toned-down version of a similar feisty female, who was named Carmen and whom Modern Cartoons had already created for Portuguese television.

"We had to de-sex her a little bit for British television," says Chris Walker, of Modern Cartoons. "Take her nipples off, make the dress less tight. In the early versions, you could see she wasn't wearing any knickers. It made some interesting meetings with the people who run the lottery. It got to a point where you said: 'For heaven's sake, this is a cartoon character!'"

"We are now in talks for her to be on Japanese TV," says Walker. "I don't know what changes they

will want. We'll probably have to put boobs on her."

Although the cost of developing the story and characters from scratch is about the same as that for more traditional animation, or other types of computer-generated images, the lure of the technology is its production efficiency. Critics claim real-time image quality often suffers and that character movement is limited to that of humans. But compared to the year it takes to produce some traditionally animated programmes, a real-time animation show can be put together as quickly as a live-action sitcom, or even broadcast live, as with the lottery show.

"You could never approach those types of speeds with traditional animation," Walker says. "It's a live-action process, but the result is an animated show. They have several shows with ensemble casts, where each character is really distinct. Actors there have more of a theatre background, and there is a strong stand-up comedy culture, which is what inspires Modern Cartoons."

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Vile swindlers in a degrading trade

Professor Jean Aitchison defends journalists against their literary critics. Interview: Kate Coughlan

Most journalists are only too familiar with the scenario: a "linguachronic" (a sufferer from language hypochondria) is banging away about how journalists are the scourge of grammar and that newspapers are a threat to "proper" English.

According to such critics, we hacks don't know the difference between "fewer" and "less than"; we use "falsome" inaccurately to describe genuine praise (it means "excessive or insincere") and what have we done to "decimate"? Not since Roman times has it meant, to most readers and listeners, "to kill every tenth man of a mutinous legion".

The "grammar police" are constantly exhorting reporters to preserve the expressive power of language by retaining more refined linguistic forms and barring the door to the cruder forms.

How refreshing, then, to explore the subject with as distinguished a language-watcher as Professor Jean Aitchison, Rupert Murdoch Professor of Language and Communication at Oxford University (who last year gave the BBC Reith lectures entitled *The Language Web*). She says: "If you analyse the national press, you actually find that journalists do not devalue the language. The standard of writing is rather high."

Wow. (It is OK to use "wow" with Professor Aitchison; she used it herself in a letter of reply to a critic.)

The tradition of criticising newspapers goes back a long way. Professor Aitchison believes it emerged in the 17th century when it was, for a time, illegal to publish "home" news. There sprang up a number of illegal, pamphlet-type news books that excited public ire. "Squealing scribes" writing a lot of "parboyl'd nonsense" filled these unlicensed publications. Even Ben Jonson, in his play *The Staple of News*, called newspapermen "dishonest swindlers".

This, says Professor Aitchison, continued into the 19th century, when the philosopher and economist John Stuart Mill called reporting "the vilest and most degrading of trades".

"Even this century," says



"Squealing scribes" filling their newspapers with a lot of "parboyl'd nonsense" ... a danger to English? Edward G. Robinson and colleagues in *Five Star Final* go to work

Professor Aitchison, "Adlai Stevenson wrote: 'An editor is one who separates the wheat from the chaff, then publishes the chaff.'"

"I find, when I say to people that I have a professional interest in journalism, most respond with 'Oh dear, that must be depressing'. When I ask why, the most common reasons given are that news is shoddily written, badly organised, poorly selected and dishonestly represented."

She admits that some journalists are lazy. "But you can't expect very high standards," she adds. "It is not as though journalists have 24 hours to polish a piece. Yet I am astonished at how well some journalists do in selecting language and using it without even being aware sometimes

that they are actually doing it. The kind of work we academics would have spent hours polishing, some journalists turn out naturally in a couple of minutes."

"The best journalists have a feel for language. They hear what people are saying with a high level of linguistic awareness. Everybody thinks it is easy, dead easy. But when they get around to trying to write in newspaper style, they can't do it. If you actually offer people an alternative to the hard-news style of writing, they get very bored indeed. The problem is that people often don't know the first thing about newspapers and don't realise, therefore, how skilled the work is."

What about the purists who challenge journalists to save the power of the language

by safeguarding standards? Language is like a thermostat. It preserves its power and its patterns by sometimes adding, sometimes subtracting. It is in a state of constant evolution. For example, "less" is slowly replacing "fewer", although in the interim both are used. "I aim at effective communication," she says. "That often means forgetting about some of those strange, archaic prohibitions found in old grammar books."

Bleaching the language, during which a word becomes less powerful, less poignant than in its original sense, is a process of great interest to her at the moment. "Today, words such as disaster, tragedy, and catastrophe require a proper noun to solemnify their meaning. I am currently working on 'devastated'. Nowadays, people use the word for quite trivial occurrences."

"I am looking for the word which will replace it. People are trying to strengthen it; they say 'utterly devastated' or 'completely devastated' to boost its impact. This signals the change."

Words bleach more quickly on the sports pages than elsewhere in newspapers. I think this is to do with the repetitive nature of sporting action. It is hard to make these repeated activities, such as kicking or volleying, interesting."

The old model of language change, which Professor Aitchison calls the "tadpole" model, requires the language to metamorphose slowly from the old into the new, just as the tadpole slowly becomes a frog. "I believe language change is better described by what I call the 'cuckoo' model," she says. "One pushes the other out of the nest. Journalists who are aware and sensitive to language will know what words are coming and which are going."

Within this liberal view of language change, there is no sense in trying to control or engineer change. Words will come when needed and go when not needed."

Single syllable words do, in general, enter the language with more ease than longer words. "Bonking", "yomping" (a word meaning marching over difficult terrain, which entered the lexicon during the Falklands War) and "wimp" are here to stay.

There are always new words coming along, but not all get taken up. "I use the rain-drops-in-a-bucket image: only a few are caught in the bucket. Dozens of new words come, but few stay." She says: "Use the form which is most concise and least likely to cause confusion."

"A desire for rigid meanings is backward-looking ignorance or simple laziness: a refusal to explore the resources of the language. It is characteristic of an ageing, insensitive speaker."

Wow.

Originally published in *Cross-Currents*, Journal of the Rewer Foundation Programme.

If it's bad, it must be a lad ad

Don't say you haven't been warned, but if you catch any of the new ads for *FHM* magazine switch off, switch over or hit the mute button before the end. You will save yourself the most irritating noise ever heard in a commercial.

By the next advertiser in the break because we'll never get to them. The noise is a cross between a klaxon and a chubb seal. It sounds as an *FHM* warning sign is slapped across the screen to denote un-*FHM*-like behaviour in the ad. It says — basically — you're not being laddish enough.

To help you avoid the ending, scenarios involve a couple of lads ignoring a bikini-clad woman to talk about the Bowers behind her; a cleavage-heavy babe asking her laddish neighbour for a cup of sugar — and getting it; a lad about to enjoy a sexual conquest before his intended victim discovers his hot-water bottle; and an airport customs official discovering a long-haired lad's pink hairdryer.

You may ask why exactly *FHM* needs to advertise, particularly on television. EMAP Metro has done an astonishing job in turning a dowdy fashion trade magazine into a cultural phenomenon.

In four years, circulation has soared from 60,000 to 644,000 trouncing even *Loaded*, the magazine that blazed a trail in the lads' sector. In so doing, it has managed to come close to the awkward trick that Rover is attempting in its new ad: to be both mainstream and cool.

However, while Rover is mainstream and advertising can do nothing to make it cool, *FHM* can lay claim to coolness. Can mainstream advertising make it nauff? Judging by these commercials, yes.

Despite featuring the likes of *FHM* cover girls, Jenny McCarthy and Isla Fisher, the ads are desperately formulaic and stilted — accusations that cannot be aimed at the product.

It's advertising by numbers. Sure,

they're glossy and there's the prerequisite punning storyline, but they lack the lightness of touch that characterises the best magazines (*FHM* included) and the best advertising (much of which is created by *FHM*'s agency, Bartle Bogle Hegarty).

It brings to mind the oft-heard marketing director's lament: whatever the problem, the ad agency's solution is the glossy TV commercial. The ads are over-art directed in the way *FHM* is not, and lumbering in contrast to the magazine's fast pace.

Then there's the trouble with lads and advertising. Too often some bright

dream (except for those who made a lot of money out of it).

The ad industry is proposing that political ads should be removed from its code of practice and taken out of the jurisdiction of the Advertising Standards Authority.

Instead, politicians will be asked to introduce their own regulatory system, a move that has divided the parties. Labour would bring political ads in line with advertising codes of practice. The Tories support the current fudged situation: nominally political ads come under the codes, but parties do not have to prove their claims.

It smacks of a mixture of cowardice and resignation on behalf of the regulators. If the ASA can adjudicate between environmental pressure groups and industrial manufacturers, or over health claims made by drugs companies, surely it can establish if unemployment is up or down.

The parties — in turn the ad regulators' paymasters — have proven impossible to police, so the ad industry has given up. In so doing it is inviting politicians to bring advertising into disrepute.

A multinational coffee company asks a new agency to run an international campaign with a loose brief about making consumers feel warm towards it. The agency asks a trendy director to create a pretty film filled with striking images of ... people being warm to each other. The panicked client hates the trendy director's cut, and insists on having its own schmaltzier images instead. What do you get? Have a look at the hotchpotch mess which is the new Nescafe ad. So much money, so few lads.



spark (called a planner in ad agencies) hits upon a "revealing" truth about the product, which is then supposed to be given an emotionally appealing twist by the creative department.

You can see this at work in the even worse Worthington beer commercials. There, the amazing "discovery" is that beer is drunk by lads. The twist the creatives came up with was what would happen if lads weren't lads — if they took an interest in knitting or did not make fun of each other. This leads to an excruciating ending: "Worthington. It's a man thing." A line that could have been used for any beer. Thankfully they all thought better of it.

The only ads that have captured the lad spirit to date are for Bachelors Super Noodles. The bloke offering his girlfriend his noodles only after he sees the dog lick them — that's an *FHM* moment!

One day, we'll all wake up and the lad phenomenon will have been a bad

Stefano Hatfield is the editor of *Campaign*



Uncool: the *FHM* television adverts with lads acting completely out of character have lacked style and wit

AN EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER THE TIMES

ADVENTURES FROM £5

Times readers can save up to 50 per cent or more on a wide range of adventure activities until July 31, 1998. They are all featured in our *Wild Spirits* supplement (free with last Saturday's *Times*).

- Book your visit in advance by telephone with one of the centres listed in the supplement and attach four differently numbered tokens from *The Times* to the coupon which will appear again on Tuesday.
- Each completed coupon entitles you to any offer featured, either as an individual, a family or with friends. Our offer prices are followed by the normal cost in brackets.
- A total of 13 tokens and five coupons will be printed in *The Times* until Saturday May 9, enabling you to try as many as three different activities if you wish.

4x4/TANK DRIVING
Langdale Quest, Yorkshire. Tel: 01723 882 335. Open 10am to 6pm. The largest 4x4 site in the UK. The Family Adventure, specially developed by Moorland Adventure Sport with the Forestry Commission. Adults experience the thrills and spills of up to 50 miles of dense, rugged terrain. For children, set along all routes, is a Treasure Hunt with clues hidden in the trees — and a prize at the end. Offer: own vehicle 1hr £10 (£20), 2hrs £12.50 (£25), 3hrs £15 (£30), Full day £22.50 (£45). Vehicle supplied 1hr £26.25 (£35), 2hrs £45 (£60), 3hrs £60 (£80), full-day £101.25 (£135). The Activity Super Store, near Andover. Tel: 01799 526526. Offer: 4x4 off-road driving, 10 places only, £81.75 (£109), Wild Tracks, Suffolk. Tel: 01638 751918. Offer: 4x4 off-road driving £40 pp half-day (£50) or £70 pp full-day (£100); tank driving £68 pp half-day (£98), £140 pp full-day (£195).

DRAG RACING
Santa Pod Raceway, Bedfordshire. Tel: 01234 782828. Two-for-one entry offer for the Main Event on May 23 or 24, £30, the Big Bang on June 7, £20, or the Summer Nationals on August 8 or 9, £30. Book in advance. Children (aged 12-16) half price. Under 12s go FREE. Free camping on site.

CLASSIC CAR DRIVING
Mithral Racing, Goodwood. Tel: 01243 528815. Aug 18. Drive three of the following: AC Cobra, Jaguar D-Type, Porsche 911 RS Carrera or 16 Chevrolet Corvair Stingray convertible. Offer: £95 (£90).

SINGLE-SEATER RACING CAR
Mithral Racing, Goodwood, Sussex. Tel: 01243 528815, Aug 11. Classroom briefing, demonstration and familiarisation laps in Alfa Romeo sports saloons; single-seater drive in two-litre racing car; white-knuckle ride in 165-bhp Caterham racer. Offer: £135 (£270).

MULTI-ACTIVITY
Ascending Parachutes, Paddock Wood, Kent. Tel: 01732 823396. Group offer: save 50% on any of the following — Go-Kart/Quad Bike/Rally Kart/4 Wheel Drive/Blind Driving/Towable Tube/Target Golf Archery. Available for groups of 15 or more, also smaller groups. Any two of above for £25 pp (£50). Any three for £35 pp (£70). Any four for £45 pp (£90). Any five for £50 pp (£100).

TOMORROW: SCUBA DIVING, SAILING AND RIVER KAYAK

CHANGING TIMES

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CONRAD BLACK'S DREAMS



Conrad Black: his pockets may not be deep enough to carry losses as he attempts to establish a national daily newspaper in his homeland of Canada

Will Black be frozen out?

Conrad Black's plan to launch a national daily in his home country of Canada has drawn comparisons with Napoleon's doomed invasion of Russia, which was a campaign too far for the French emperor. The similarities are appropriate, given the media baron's fascination with the great military leader, a strategist who has served as Black's inspiration.

This September Black will enter the cold Canadian newspaper climate with a colour broadsheet to compete with the *Globe & Mail*, Canada's only national newspaper. Though the daily has not been officially named, two domains have been reserved on the Internet: timescanada.com and canadatimes.com. Although the *Times of Canada* is only at dummy stage, the enterprise has aroused great interest.

"It has taken a long time, but there is a renaissance in print around the world," says Gord Fisher, the editorial director for Southam Inc. the force behind the venture. "Mr Black has known this for some time." (Black's company, Hollinger Inc, has a 58 per cent interest in Southam.)

Such reasoning has compelled Black to make his move now, after months of secret negotiations with lieutenants. He has agreed to invest up to C\$130

Conrad Black plans to launch another Canadian newspaper. Bruce Culp reports

million (£52m) for seven years, until the publication, printed in nine cities from a Toronto newsroom, achieves a profitable circulation of 200,000.

Black's return to Canadian newspapers is being taken seriously by the existing four Toronto-based dailies, especially by the *Globe & Mail*. The *Globe*, which has a circulation of 318,000, will print in colour from this summer and has been tweaking its sports coverage for months. The *Globe* responded to Black's declaration with a predictable blast of grapefruit. "I don't know what he is thinking," says the *Globe's* publisher, Roger Parkinson. "They say he plays with toy soldiers. But we are ready."

At 53, Black commands the third largest media empire in the world, with 4.3 million readers — next only to Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, parent company of *The Times*, and the American chain Gannett, publishers of *USA Today*.

It has taken Black almost 30 years to reach that position. Striking his first deal for control of a small Quebec weekly in the 1960s — in a C\$500

arrangement which included a rug — his speciality has been turning failing titles around. Even high-profile competitors respect his nose for the balance sheet, as well as the sting of his fountain pen.

To get an idea of what Black is up against, media watchers point to *USA Today*, a fable of tears for its founder Al Neuharth. John K. Hartman, a journalism professor at Central Michigan University, says the paper lost about \$100 million (£66 million) each year in the 1980s. "The woods are full with failed ventures," he says. "Neuharth bled the rest of the papers in his chain to keep it going."

Though he has deep pockets, Black's entry into Canada's national marketplace could bankrupt him. Richard Siklos, correspondent with *The Financial* and author of the biography *Shades of Black*, says: "Even if his paper doesn't succeed, it is his way of pushing into the market. But Black is an acquirer of newspapers. He has never started one before."

When Black failed to gain control of the *Globe & Mail* in 1979, he looked to

projects abroad. With an endgame in mind, he promised to save the financially-troubled *Daily Telegraph*. Within a year, he was in full control.

Black's new national daily will be a stepchild of the hard lessons learnt from London's price wars. He has considered virtually giving away his paper for two years, pushing the *Globe & Mail*, owned by Thomson, on to the back foot. Then, if all goes well, he can swoop and strike a favourable agreement. "Black is so clever he will make it work strategically," Siklos says. "His talent is for striking deals and wringing costs."

The new enterprise signals the end of Canada's newspaper recession and a decade of soaring newsprint costs. Not long ago, as the advertising drought grew worse and circulation plummeted, one of the country's oldest journalism schools wrote off the future by announcing, though momentarily, that it would close down.

Advertisers throughout Canada are jubilant about Black's plan. "It is one of the most exciting things that has happened in years," says Ann Boden, the president of McKim Media group. She is one of the few people to have seen the prototype of the new paper, after signing a confidentiality agreement. "It looks good," she said.

The golden silence of Chris Smith

On the first anniversary of Labour's electoral triumph, it is a pleasure to report that the Government has no plans at the moment to introduce broadcasting legislation. We may be knee-deep in task forces, the Millennium Dome may inexorably be absorbing hundreds of millions of lottery money which might have been better spent, and Cool Britannia has already come and gone — but there is absolutely no sign of a new Broadcasting Bill.

This is a deeply positive development for both broadcasters and viewers, and all sensible people should seek to strengthen the determination of Chris Smith, Secretary for Culture, Media and Sport, to continue to do nothing for as long as possible — or at least until the summer reshuffle.

All sorts of temptations will be put in his path. Earlier this year he had to beat off, in a remarkably adroit way, the wild-eyed fanatics demanding that he set a definitive date for switching off analogue broadcasts. Stripped of jargon, this would mean the entire population having to, as opposed to choosing to, buy digital equipment in order to continue watching television.

A further challenge will inevitably come within the next two months from Gerald Kaufman's culture select committee. You have only to mention the word "convergence" and the entire committee takes leave of its senses and starts speaking in tongues.

Chris Smith's distressingly low-key performance before the committee at the end of last month must have left them all terribly unsatisfied. How could they be expected to forgive him for keeping his brain engaged and arguing shamelessly that viewer habits would evolve only gradually, rather than change dramatically when new services are introduced?

It was a bit much for one member of the committee, John Maxton, to take in. The Secretary of State's answer, Mr Maxton spluttered, seemed to imply only "minor change" was taking place in the communications world, whereas everybody knew we are at the beginning of a revolution more significant than anything that has happened in the last 200 years.

When the select committee's inevitably radical report is received, Mr Smith can be relied upon to give it the full level of consideration it merits — and ignore it.

The time for thought will, however, be very useful in holding up the promised

Green Paper on media regulation and convergence, which should have been coming out about now. Instead, the way is clear to delay the Green Paper well beyond the summer. It will, anyway, be a very green. Green Paper, doing little more than posing questions about the future of regulation in the age of converging media, telecommunications and computers.

On such complex matters a long period of public consultation would be prudent and we would be deep into 1999 before it would be feasible to even consider publishing a White Paper with green edges, the term used when politicians are having difficulty making up their minds. Against such a background, producing a Bill before the year 2000 would amount to indecent haste. By then, of course, Tony Blair will be worrying more about general elections than media convergence.

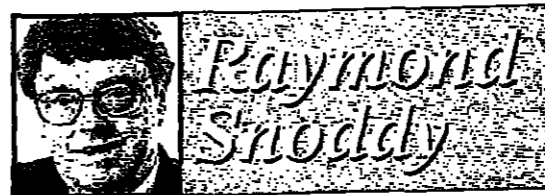
So it can be predicted with some certainty that primary legislation is very unlikely before 2002, with matters of detail being dealt with by secondary legislation in the meantime. Legislation then would also have the advantage of being able to cope with any changes at the BBC after a planned review of both its licence fee and regulatory structure.

The only problem is that the Prime Minister may prefer happy-clappy action, rather than the present wise silence. He should listen to his Secretary of State.

No one can know before they are launched how all the dozens and dozens of new digital television channels will fare, or the extent to which computers, transactional services and the Internet will invade the living-room.

There is only one certainty, and that is that all the current predictions will probably be wrong. Nothing could be more foolish than trying to legislate in advance for a market that does not yet exist.

If further evidence is needed, look at the Government's announcement last week that it would keep an old electoral promise and "liberate" BT to compete in the broadcasting market against cable from 2001. The announcement was greeted with nervous laughter among all involved because the market had already changed and BT no longer wanted such liberation. BT naturally thanked the Government for the kind thought.



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Williams and Another v Natural Life Health Foods Ltd and Another

Before Lord Goff of Chieveley, Lord Slynn, Lord Hoffmann, Lord Clyde and Lord Hutton [Speeches April 30]

A director or employee of a limited company could only be liable for negligent mis-statement, under the principle in *Hedley Byrne & Co Ltd v Heller & Partners Ltd* [1964] AC 463. It was shown objectively that the plaintiff could reasonably have relied on such an assumption of personal responsibility by him as to create a special relationship between him and the plaintiff.

The House of Lords allowed an appeal by the second defendant, Richard Langley, from the majority of the Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Hirst and Lord Justice Waite, Sir Patrick Russell dissenting) (*The Times* January 9, 1997), who had dismissed his appeal from Mr Justice Langley who on December 1, 1995, had awarded the plaintiffs, David Ian Williams and Christine Margaret Reid, damages of £84,041 against Mr Mistlin.

Mr Michael Bloch for Mr Mistlin; Mr James Munby, QC and Mr Gerard Van Tonder for the plaintiffs.

LORD STEYN said that in about 1980 Mr Mistlin had started to work in the health food trade. In 1982 he had opened a shop in Salisbury. In 1986 he had formed Natural Life Health Foods Ltd to franchise the concept of retail health food shops.

He had been managing director and principal shareholder. His wife had been a nominal shareholder and also employed by the company. There had been two

employees. Mr Padwick and Miss Shepherd. Both had had some franchising experience.

In 1987, the plaintiffs had approached the company with a view to obtaining a franchise. Mr Padwick had given them a brochure, describing the company's system as "a proven concept" and the company's team, including Mr Mistlin. In glowing terms.

The company had sent the plaintiffs detailed financial projections demonstrating the likely future profitability of the shop. Mr Mistlin had played a prominent part in the production of the projections.

All the material pre-contractual documents had been on the company's notepaper. The plaintiffs had dealt with Mr Padwick. They had not known Mr Mistlin and had no material pre-contractual dealings with him.

They had entered into a franchise agreement. Their shop had opened in 1987. The turnover had proved substantially below predicted. The business had traded at a loss for 18 months and then ceased trading.

The plaintiffs had sued the company for damages representing the financial loss they had suffered as a result of its negligent advice. The cause of action had been based on an assumption of responsibility by it.

It had been wound up in 1992 and dissolved in 1993, and in 1992 it had joined Mr Mistlin as a defendant, their action against him being based on an assumption of personal responsibility by him.

After the dissolution of the company the action had proceeded against him alone. The judge had found him personally liable to the

plaintiffs under the *Hedley Byrne* principle.

It had been settled in *Henderson v Merrett Syndicates Ltd* [1995] 2 AC 145, where the governing principles had been stated by Lord Goff, that the *Hedley Byrne* assumption of responsibility principle was not confined to statements but might apply, as the extended *Hedley Byrne* principle, to any assumption of responsibility for the provision of services.

Reliance by the other party on the assumption was necessary to establish a cause of action because otherwise the negligence would have no causative effect.

The principle was not confined to companies, but to establish personal liability under it, it was not sufficient that there should have been a special relationship with the principal. There had to have been an assumption of responsibility such as to create a special relationship with the director or employee himself.

The touchstone of liability was not the state of mind of the defendant. An objective test (*Henderson* [at p18]) meant that the primary focus had to be on things said or done by the defendant or on his behavior in dealings with the plaintiff, although obviously the impact of what a defendant said or did had to be judged in its relevant context.

The test was not simply reliance in fact but whether the plaintiff could reasonably have relied on an assumption of personal responsibility.

Distinguished academic writers had criticised the principle of assumption of responsibility as often resting on a fiction, but the general criticism was overstated.

It was important, however, to make it clear that a director of a contracting company might only be held liable where it was established by evidence that he had assumed personal liability and that there had been the necessary reliance.

Mr Mistlin had owned and controlled the company, which had held itself out as having the expertise to provide reliable advice to franchisees. The brochure had made it clear that that expertise derived from Mr Mistlin's experience in operating his own shop. Those circumstances were insufficient to make him personally liable to the plaintiffs.

As Sir Patrick Russell had pointed out in a small one-man company "the managing director will almost inevitably be the one possessed of qualities essential to the functioning of the company". By itself that factor did not convey to them that he was willing to assume personal responsibility to the company's customers.

There had been no personal dealings between Mr Mistlin and the plaintiffs and no exchanges or conduct that could have conveyed to them that he was willing to assume personal responsibility to them.

There was not even evidence that he had believed that he was doing so. There was nothing to show that they could reasonably have relied on him for indemnification of any loss.

Lord Goff, Lord Hoffmann, Lord Clyde and Lord Hutton agreed.

Solicitors: Radcliffes for Trethowan Woodford, Andover; Kingsford Stacey, Blackwall for Williams & Co. Law.

Acquiescence bars relief

Gafford v Graham and Another

Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Pill and Lord Justice Thorpe [Judgment April 8]

A landowner enjoying the benefit of restrictive covenants over adjoining land who, with full knowledge of his rights, failed to seek interdictory relief to restrain the unlawful erection of an indoor riding school and to prevent the unlawful use of the covenant land by its owner was not to be granted mandatory or prohibitory injunctions for the demolition of the building and for the use of the land for a riding school, business to cease. Instead the landowner was to receive damages to compensate him for the injury to his legal rights.

Moreover, the absence of complaint for several years by the landowner about other breaches of the restrictive covenants over the adjoining land amounted to acquiescence that barred his right to relief in respect of them.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment allowing in part an appeal by the defendants, Mr A. H. Graham and Grandco Securities Ltd, and dismissing the cross-appeal by the plaintiff, Mr Douglas Gafford, from the judgment of Judge Simpson in the Mayor's and City of London County Court in December 1996 whereby he had ordered the defendants to cease operating the business of a riding school at Littlemead Stn, Hunston, Chichester, and to pay damages to the plaintiff of £20,750 for other breaches of the building restriction.

In 1980 and 1983 two parcels of adjoining freehold land and a bungalow that had been subject to restrictive covenants were conveyed to the defendant, Mr Graham.

The plaintiff, the owner of adjoining land, enjoyed the benefit of those covenants that restricted the use of the premises to that of a livery yard and stabling for horses and one residential bungalow and prohibited any building on the land unless approved by the plaintiff.

The plaintiff alleged breaches by the defendant in that (i) in 1986 the bungalow was converted without

the plans being approved into a two-storey house and a barn on the land extended; (ii) in 1989 an indoor riding school had, without approval of the plans, been constructed on the land; and (iii) the business of a riding school was being carried on on the land.

The judge held that the defendant had been in breach of the covenants as alleged by the plaintiff; that plans had not been submitted to the plaintiff and would not have been approved by him if they had been; he rejected the defence of acquiescence; refused the plaintiffs request for an order for demolition of the riding school but ordered the defendant to cease operating the business of a riding school; granted an injunction restraining the defendant from using the land other than as a livery yard and for stabling horses, and awarded the plaintiff damages for the conversion of the bungalow to a riding school; granted an injunction restraining the defendant from erecting a building on the land other than as a livery yard and for stabling horses, and awarded the plaintiff damages for the conversion of the bungalow to a riding school; granted an injunction restraining the defendant from erecting a building on the land other than as a livery yard and for stabling horses, and awarded the plaintiff damages for the conversion of the bungalow to a riding school.

Thus the plaintiff acquiesced in the conversion and the extension, his acquiescence being a bar to all relief in respect of those matters.

The judge's award of damages in respect of those matters should be discharged.

The plaintiff's real and substantial complaints arose out of the construction of the riding school in 1989 and the carrying on of the indoor riding school business which it had led to clear breaches of the user and building restrictions.

In contrast to his inaction over the bungalow and barn, the plaintiff acted promptly in 1989 asserting what rights he had against the defendant.

The criticism that could be made of the plaintiff was that he made no application for interdictory relief. Had he carried out the threats made through his solicitor to the defendant, there could have been little doubt that he would have been granted an injunction restraining the building works.

The plaintiff's omission to apply for interdictory relief was an important factor to be taken into account by the judge when considering whether he ought to have granted a mandatory injunction for the demolition of the riding school.

The principles on which to grant an injunction or to award damages in lieu under the Chancery Amendment Act 1858 had been considered by the Court of Appeal in *Jaggard v Sawyer*.

It would not be right to interfere with the judge's decision not to order demolition of the riding school. As a general rule, someone who with the knowledge of his legal rights and the ability to enforce them, stood by while a permanent and substantial structure was unlawfully erected, ought not to be granted an injunction to have it pulled down.

In 1986 to complain of the conversion and barn extension; see *Shaw v Applegate* [1977] 1 WLR 970, 978 and 980 and *Taylor's Fashions Ltd v Liverpool Victoria Trustees Co Ltd* [1982] QB 133, 157.

On the facts that question could only be answered in the affirmative. The plaintiff had made no complaint until his solicitor wrote to the defendant about three years after the acts complained of.

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So what was to be done? One further factor tipped the balance. In 1989 the plaintiff had made it clear to the defendant that he would be prepared to accept a cash sum in settlement of the dispute and had suggested an amount of £100,800. That sum was obviously excessive but why should the plaintiff not be held to that position and granted damages in lieu of an injunction?

It was said that an insurmountable obstacle to such an award was presented by the fact that the plaintiff had made it clear to the defendant that he would be prepared to accept a cash sum in settlement of the dispute and had suggested an amount of £100,800. That sum was obviously excessive but why should the plaintiff not be held to that position and granted damages in lieu of an injunction?

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Sentence discount for useful information

Regina v A (Informers: Reduction of Sentence) Regina v B (Same)

Before Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Lord Chief Justice, Mr Justice Turner and Mr Justice Penny-Davey [Judgment April 23]

Where a defendant pleaded guilty and gave valuable information, which the reasonable expectation that he would give valuable help in future, his assistance was reflected by the judge by a discount of the sentence. But where the value of the information, quantitatively or qualitatively, had not been fully appreciated when sentence was passed, or that supplied after sentence greatly exceeded the reasonable expectation of the sentencing judge, it was appropriate for the Court of Appeal to review the sentence and reduce it to reflect the true value of the assistance.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, so held when allowing appeals by A and B from sentences of 12 and 14 years respectively imposed by Judge Rook, QC, at Canterbury Crown Court following their pleas of guilty to offences contrary to section 170(2) of the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979 in relation to the importation of a class A controlled drug, namely a large quantity of ecstasy tablets.

Mr Sir Allan Greig, QC, as amicus curiae; Mr David P. Fisher, QC and Mr Mark Bryant-Heron for the prosecution.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE,

giving the judgment of the court, said that the main point taken by A and B on their appeal against sentence was that insufficient credit had been given for the help they had extended to the authorities, particularly since conviction.

The relevant principles were: 1. Defendants were discounted to reflect pleas of guilty. A defendant who indicated his intention so to plead at an early stage would ordinarily earn a greater discount than a defendant who pleaded guilty at a late stage in the proceedings.

2. Where defendants cooperated in the prosecuting authorities, not only by so pleading, but by testifying or expressing willingness to testify, or making a witness statement incriminating a co-defendant, they would ordinarily earn an enhanced discount of their sentences, particularly where such conduct led to the conviction of a co-defendant or a plea of guilty.

3. It had been the long standing practice of the courts to recognise by a further discount of sentence the help given and expected to be given to the authorities in the investigation, detection, suppression and prosecution of serious crime. The extent of the discount ordinarily depended on the value of the help given.

Value was a function of quality and quantity. If the information was unreliable, vague, lacking in practical utility or already known to the authorities, no identifiable discount might be given or, if given, any discount would be minimal.

If the information was accurate,

particularised, useful in practice and hitherto unknown to the authorities, enabling serious criminal activity to be stopped and serious criminals brought to book, the discount might be substantial.

Where by supplying valuable information to the authorities, a defendant exposed himself or his family to personal jeopardy it would ordinarily be recognised in the sentence passed.

For all those purposes account would be taken of the help given and reasonably expected to be given in the future. It was important that information be given in the form indicated by the authorities.

4. If a defendant denied guilt but was convicted and sentenced without supplying valuable information before sentence or expressing willingness to do so, the Court of Appeal would not ordinarily reduce sentence to take account of information supplied by him after sentence.

The reason for that general rule was clear: the Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, was a court of review, its function being to review sentences imposed by courts at first instance, not to make a sentencing exercise of its own from the beginning. Thus it would ordinarily rely on material before the sentencing court.

A defendant who denied guilt and withheld all cooperation before conviction and sentence could not hope to receive an identifiable discount in the Court of Appeal by cooperating with the authorities after sentence. In such a situation the defendant had to address

appropriate representations to the Parole Board or the Home Office. 5. To that general rule there was one apparent, but only partial, exception. It sometimes happened that a defendant pleaded guilty and gave help to the authorities, for which credit was given, explicitly or not, when sentence was passed.

In such a case the sentencing court would do its best to assess and give due credit for information already supplied and information which, it was reasonably hoped, would be supplied thereafter.

But it might be that the value of the help was not that stage fully appreciated, or that the help thereafter given greatly exceeded in quality or quantity or both what could reasonably have been expected when sentence was passed, so that in either event the credit given did not reflect the true measure of the help in fact received by the authorities.

In such cases the appellate court did, as it should review the sentence, adjusting it if necessary to reflect the value of the help given, and to be given, by the defendant.

Applying those principles to the present cases the court concluded that A and B were entitled to some additional credit for help given which had proved more valuable in terms of quality and quantity than the judge had reasonably been expected when passing sentence and a reduction of two years in each case would be made.

Solicitors: Ralph Haemans & Co, Peckham; Treasury Solicitor; Solicitor, Customs and Excise.

Majority lay decision cannot stand

Regina v Department of Health, Ex parte Bhaugeeruty and Another

Before Mr Justice Harrison [Judgment April 7]

A draft majority decision of two lay members of the Registrar of Health Tribunals could not stand in law as the decision of the tribunal as it was formulated after the death of the legally qualified chairman, who had reached a contrary conclusion and who never had the opportunity to consider and make a decision on the substance of the decision.

Mr Justice Harrison so held in the Queen's Bench Division in allowing an application for judicial review to quash the decision of the Department of Health on January 29, 1998, to promote the draft majority decision of the Registrar of Health Tribunals on November 22, 1996, on an appeal by Amaron Bhaugeeruty and Shanti Rooyaree Bhaugeeruty, proprietors of Pelsall Residential Home, Walsall, against a decision of Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council, the registration authority, on May 21, 1996, to cancel the registration of the home under section 10 of the Registered Homes Act 1984.

Mr Michel Fordham for Mr and Mrs Bhaugeeruty; Ms Tina Cook for the council; the Department of Health took no part in the proceedings.

MR JUSTICE HARRISON said in November 1996, Mr and Mrs Bhaugeeruty's appeal was put before a tribunal which consisted of Judge Harwood, QC and two experienced lay members not legally qualified members.

The chairman prepared a draft decision in relation to the section 10 appeal.

Further meetings were arranged with the tribunal members for discussion of the case but unfortunately the chairman was too ill to attend and he subsequently died.

Prior to his death, he had produced a statement which indicated that if the lay members were agreed with his decision then his written decision, subject to any textual alterations, should stand as the decision of the tribunal as a dissenting judgment.

Rule 11 of the Registered Homes

Regulations (SI 1984 No 1346) provides:

"(1) The decision of the tribunal ... shall be the decision of the majority.

"(2) The chairman of the tribunal shall, as soon as possible after the hearing, notify the appellant and registration authority in writing of the decision and the reasons for the decision."

Rules 9(2), 9(3), 10(2) and 10(3) dealt respectively with the powers of the chairman to require the attendance of further witnesses, to permit affidavits evidence, to rule on the admissibility of evidence in the interests of justice and to call for further information or reports as thought desirable.

His Lordship distinguished *R v Greater Manchester Valuation Panel, Ex parte Shell Chemicals UK Ltd* [1982] 1 QB 255, where all three members who were agreed had met, discussed the case and formulated a unanimous decision prior to the chairman's death.

In this case there was a divergence of view between the chairman and the other two members who agreed to meet over two days and finalise the decision.

There was no doubt that the chairman would have attempted to change the minds of the other two members' draft majority decision in light of his experience. It was

impossible to say that the decision of the two members would have remained the same in a case where there was disagreement.

Mr Fordham submitted that on a proper interpretation there was not a properly constituted tribunal, contrary to section 43(1) of the Act. Further, that a tribunal of two was a statutory nonentity, otherwise that would mean that there could be two members at any stage. Mr Fordham's arguments were strengthened by rule 1(2).

Ms Cook submitted that as the chairman had given a written decision, the tribunal was properly constituted and much time and money would be wasted if the proceedings were terminated and a rehearing ordered.

His Lordship said that in looking at the inter-relationship between the definition of a tribunal and rules 1(1) and 1(2), and the wide powers given to the chairman, a tribunal of two was not a properly constituted tribunal, and could not promulgate a decision when the legally qualified member could not be a member in a case where there was no unanimous agreement and where the decision had not been finalised.

His Lordship ordered a rehearing of the section 10 appeal.

Solicitors: Hadens, Leicester; Coles & Co, Queen Howard Tain, Walsall.

European Law Report

Different life assurance tax treatment unlawful

Safir v Skattemyndigheten i Dalarnas Län

Case C-418/96
Before G. C. Rodríguez Iglesias, President and Judges C. Gulmann, H. Ragnemalm, M. Wahelet, R. Schüing, G. F. Meinel, J. C. Molitoro de Almeida, P. J. G. Kapteyn, J. L. Murray, D. A. O. Edwards, J.-P. Puitsochet, G. Hirsch and P. Jann

Advocate General G. Tesauro [Opinion September 23, 1997] [Judgment April 28]

National legislation which applied different tax treatment to life assurance policies taken out with companies established in the country in question and those established in other member states, was precluded by article 59 of the EC Treaty on freedom of services.

The Court of Justice of the

European Communities so held on a reference for a preliminary ruling under article 177 of the Treaty by Länsrätten (the County Administrative Court) in Dalarnas Län, Sweden.

By the Swedish Law on Yield Tax on Pension Funds of 1990, insurance companies established in Sweden had to pay a tax on the yield from capital insurance, calculated by a standard method involving the capital of the company at the end of a year less the company's financial liabilities at that time.

By the Premium Tax Law of 1990, persons domiciled or resident in Sweden who took out life assurance with companies not established in Sweden had to pay a tax on the premiums paid.

Those taxpayers had to register themselves and declare the pay-

ment of premiums to the tax authority.

If, in the state where it was established, the insurance company was subject to revenue tax comparable to that payable by insurance companies established in Sweden, the authority could, at the request of the taxpayer, grant an exemption from premium tax or reduce it by half, depending on the amount of the foreign tax.

In 1995 the plaintiff took out capital life assurance with Skandia Life Assurance Co Ltd, a British insurance company operating in Sweden, and applied for exemption from tax on the premiums.

The authority reduced the amount of tax by half, but the plaintiff maintained that the tax was not payable at all, on the ground that it was incompatible with Community law.

The national court stated that the declared aim of the Premium Tax Law was to ensure competitive neutrality between savings in the form of capital life assurance taken out with Swedish and foreign companies, but that since the difference between the taxation arrangements for the one and the other might be incompatible with the Treaty, a reference would be made to the Court of Justice.

In its judgment the European Court of Justice held:

By article 60 of the Treaty, the provision of insurance constituted a service within article 59.

Article 59, inter alia, precluded national legislation which had the effect of making the provision of services between member states more difficult than such provision exclusively within one member state.

First, unlike persons who had taken out capital life assurance with companies established in Sweden, persons insured with companies not established in Sweden, did not have to register themselves and declare premium payments to the tax authority.

Policyholders also had to pay the tax themselves and for that purpose find the necessary funds which had negative consequences for them in terms of liquidity.

Although such obligations could not in themselves be regarded as contrary to Community law, they could dissuade interested persons from taking out capital life assurance with companies not established in Sweden, since no particular action on their part was called for if they took out insurance with companies established in Sweden, tax being levied in that case on the company.

Second, the surrender after a short period of a life assurance policy taken out with a company not established in Sweden was more costly than the surrender of a policy with a company established there, and that was another dissuasive factor in as much as a person would not know, on taking out a policy, whether, and if so when, he would surrender it.

Third, on an application for exemption from or reduction of premium tax, the tax authority required precise information on the income tax to which the company was subject in the other member state.

Such a requirement was particu-

Luxembourg

lary burdensome for the policyholder and also might dissuade insurance companies which still did not operate in Sweden from offering their services there.

Fourth, the determination of premium tax depended on the tax authority's assessment of the tax regime applicable to the insured in 1995 different decisions had been adopted in relation to applications for exemption made by certain British life assurance companies, although the British tax regime had not been altered.

Such differences of assessment were liable to create uncertainty which might dissuade individuals from taking out long-term contracts, such as capital life assurance contracts, with insurers not established in Sweden.

Legislation such as that in question, therefore contained a number of elements liable to dissuade individuals from taking out capital life assurance with companies not established in Sweden, and to dissuade insurance companies from offering their services on the Swedish market.

The Swedish Government sought to justify the differences in the tax regimes by the argument, inter alia, that there was a need to fill the fiscal vacuum arising from the non-taxation of savings in the form of capital life assurance taken out with companies not established in Sweden.

However, legislation such as that in Sweden made it difficult if not impossible for the national court called on to determine whether the tax regime was discriminatory, to compare yield tax on the one hand and premium tax on the other.

Other systems which were more transparent and also capable of filling the fiscal vacuum referred to, while being less restrictive of the freedom to provide services, were conceivable, in particular a system for charging tax on the yield on life assurance capital applicable to all insurance policies, whether taken out with companies established in the member state in question or ones established elsewhere.

On those grounds, the Court of Justice ruled:

Article 59 of the EC Treaty precluded the application of national legislation relating to the taxation of capital life assurance such as the legislation in question in the case.

Tour tachograph not required

Criminal proceedings against E. Clarke Ltd & Sons (Coaches) Ltd and Another

Case C-417/97
Before M. Wahelet, President of Chamber and Judges P. Jann and L. Sevón

Advocate General S. Alber [Opinion January 29] [Judgment April

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EDUCATION

Please, Sir, where are you?

Falling numbers of teachers are causing recruiting worries for heads.

Hugh Thompson on a worsening problem

Yet more evidence emerged this week of the dire position facing schools after it was revealed that teacher numbers have dropped. The figures come just as the Government is trying to attract more people into the profession.

Stephen Byers, the School Standards Minister, blamed the Tory Government's Budget cuts and last year's rush for early retirement as teachers' pension arrangements were tightened.

There were about 1,300 fewer teachers in service this January, and no immediate sign of an upturn.

Most of the losses came in nurseries, which the Government is trying to expand, and primary schools, where the aim is to cut class sizes. Both initiatives obviously require more teachers.

In some ways, however, it was the absence of a significant rise in secondary school numbers that was the most alarming aspect.

The secondary population is still rising, and several thousand extra teachers were needed just to maintain existing staffing levels. While primary school training courses still show a healthy level of applications, those for secondary teaching are in decline.

No profession cries wolf more often than teaching. Shortages, crisis, lack of funding, demotivation and demoralisation have been the slogans of the profession for 30 years.

Now, however, schools are not only having to spend more of their scarce budgets on advertising and re-advertising posts, but the quality of those they are recruiting is often such that these posts soon become vacant again.

Niel Thornley, head teacher of Bacup Fearn High School in Manchester, says: "It's getting really desperate. I have just advertised for the second time for a maths teacher with four years' experience and I got only nine applications."

"At least this time I will get a short list. To me, it's a Sword of Damocles waiting to fall, because I know that at some time in the near future the lack of numbers and ability applying for posts will mean I'll have to appoint someone I know is just not suitable."

"The days when you had first-class degrees and really gifted people queuing up have gone. That said, I just advertised a Religious Education post and got three really good applicants. But the way the numbers and the quality are going I see a real crisis coming."

Most schools have most problems with mathematics, science and languages — the very areas that the Government is extremely keen to tackle.

As the emphasis is more and more on improving standards and exam results, head teachers find it paradoxical that the most vital raw material — teachers — is in short supply. Not least because good teachers are so in demand that their existing school will play every trick in the budget book to keep them. Typically, areas where housing is expensive and social deprivation highest are cited as finding it the most difficult to recruit.

Few experienced teachers will choose to leave an established post to go to a school where teaching is extremely difficult.

Carol Whitley, head teacher of Carisbrook High School, on the Isle of Wight, says: "We recently advertised for posts in Music and RE and we got ten applications. Sometimes you fill the place with a temporary appointment, sometimes you take on a couple of part-timers which may not do the children's sense of continuity much good. Standards are already being affected."

But head teachers around the country give the impression that though shortages are getting worse, there are still enough teachers applying for vacancies. And, once again, head teachers are, by getting better at placing recruiting advertisements earlier, making contacts with training colleges, juggling existing staff and part-timers etc. making do.

Nevertheless, relatively well-paid jobs, which even two years ago would have attracted 70 applicants, are now reduced to fields of 15, and by the time interviewing begins, the best have often already been snapped up.

Tony Downey, head teacher at Willowgarth High School, in Barnsley, says: "It's the lack of choice that is so depressing. One is often faced with only five or six applying, of which only one is any good. I think that we will soon reach the point when there is no one worthwhile applying. "It's not that bad quite yet, although recently we advertised for a head of music and drama and got no applicants at all."

In some areas, the decline of local industries and the consequent loss of jobs has had a silver lining for schools.

This can lead to an over-supply of



Teacher takes charge: but more and more schools are having difficulty in recruiting suitable staff

applicants, as David Nicholls, head teacher of Lintlover Community School, in Derby, found recently.

"Our experience over the last few years has been cutting back on staff but last year we recruited four first-timers, two in Science, one Information Technology and one English teacher."

"I was really impressed with the applications we got and had a very strong short list to recruit from. It was very uplifting because I knew I would be turning away teachers

I would gladly have employed."

London's leafy suburbs can also be a draw for teachers, who believe that they may encounter fewer social problems.

Heather Flint, head teacher at Waldegrave School, in Twickenham, says: "We are still getting between ten and 20 applicants for every job. Of course, things have become worse, but there is no crisis yet."

"The last mathematics teacher I recruited was a maths graduate, which is meant to be something of

an extinct species, and the last bunch of teachers in arts subjects I recruited were excellent. It may be that we have a reputation as a school where teachers can enjoy their profession, which makes us exceptional."

Or it may be that the problems that teaching organisations make so much of are not quite as dire as they would have us believe.

But the evidence of the record 315 pages of job advertising in *The Times Educational Supplement* one week last month suggests otherwise.

Divorce: a child's view

Susan Elkin watches a powerful student play about separation

Other people's words can kill you, punch holes in you like paper. Stricks and stones may break my bones. But words will shatter me to pieces," said Christine Poole, a pupil at Sawston Village College, an 11 to 16 grant-maintained secondary in Cambridgeshire.

It was an intensely moving opening sequence in a powerful play about the horrors of divorce. Christine's voice was clear and even. And cutting.

Featuring 13 actors, aged 11 to 15, and a backstage team of four who are members of their school's creative drama group, *You Made Me* was written by Kelvin Reynolds, a history teacher, and his colleague Adrian Lockwood, who teaches English and drama.

It is a short, well-directed piece about how divorce affects children. The point of view is unequivocally the child's. "Kelly" (Helena Johnson) is miserably packing her bag to go to her father's for the weekend: "It's all so confusing. I change my opinions all the time. Agreeing with one side and then the other. Being careful not to criticise or hurt their feelings. It's so difficult trying to please everyone all the time."

"Funny they can't live with each other but they have to know every little detail about what the other one's doing. I feel like the Internet — access to all information. They stopped being the missiles a long time ago. Hostilities replaced by mutual suspicion. Now it's the age of the cold war, the uneasy peace and I'm in no man's land, trapped in the barbed wire, like piggy in the middle."

Last term *You Made Me* won the Adjudicator's Trophy — a silver rose bowl — at the Sawston Drama Festival. This term it was part of the Cambridge Festival.

The children have worked hard to produce a work of high quality and impact.

But there's more to it than that. Divorce is an education issue. Children of divorced or separated parents are more likely to be emotionally disturbed than their peers whose parents live together. That can lead to underachievement.

Parents separating is every child's worst fear. Adults get so bound up in their own quarrels and concerns that they forget their children's needs. "My mum admits that she'd never really thought about how her divorce from my dad had been for me until I started work on this play and began talking to her about it," a cast member said.

Children whose parents split up often feel the rows and disagreements were their fault. *You Made Me* explores those feelings in a court scene in which a judge (Michelle Bain) berates the child for "unforgivable failures to resolve the domestic situation in a time of marital crisis."

You Made Me was put together last summer, and developed through improvisational work with the drama group. Initially Reynolds and Lockwood were trying to assemble something that could be used in personal and social lessons.

"We have tried to highlight the problems children of divorced parents face — underachievement, isolation and lack of a role model at home," says Reynolds.

You Made Me will have been painful for many parents to watch. Staying together for the sake of the children may be an old-fashioned idea, but the children depicted in this play believe it would be better than what happens now.

"You made me," a child tells her absent parents. "Be careful. Handle with care."



Pre-schools fight back

Hundreds of parents and staff will travel to London next week to celebrate the importance of the pre-school movement. Many more have signified their support in a huge petition to be presented to Parliament.

Feelings are running high in the 18,000 pre-schools that make up the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The last couple of years have been extremely hard with the introduction, first, of nursery education vouchers and the loss of four-year-olds into reception classes, and then the complete change in arrangements since the election of the Labour Government.

Hundreds of pre-schools have closed, hundreds more confront an uncertain future: nearly all leaders are apprehensive about what may lie in store.

For 37 years, pre-schools, formerly known as playgroups, have helped fill the enormous gap in early years' services in Britain. Without funding and lacking much in the way of resources, parents and teachers have united to create self-help nursery schools in practically every

Margaret Lochrie argues the case for supporting playgroups



Lochrie: playgroup power

20 million children have benefited as a result and every weekday nearly a million children enjoy a safe place to play and a good educational start in life.

Pre-schools have also achieved an enviable record in helping parents to gain confidence and new skills, and to grasp opportunities to return to college or to retrain. Many former parents now working as social workers, teachers, or early years advisers, will readily admit that involvement in pre-schools

created a springboard for an entirely fresh start in life. In this way, pre-schools act as a gateway to learning as well as a gateway from Welfare to Work, and independent research has shown the benefits to parents of improving their parenting skills.

At a time when the Government is committed to putting education at the top of its policy agenda, the closure of so many pre-schools might be seen as looking a gift horse in the mouth. Many pre-school leaders are wondering why, when the Government wants to see more parental responsibility and more adults returning to study and mothers to work, the role of pre-schools seems to count for so little.

Education ministers are clearly sincere about partnership and supportive of the voluntary sector, but the closures continue. Our children now start school at four, something which has been set in stone in most of the new Early Years Development Plans demanded by the Government. If voluntary nurseries

and pre-schools are forced to close, the closures are something which most local authorities are prepared to live.

This sterile conflict between schools and voluntary nurseries helps nobody, least of all the children. With the imminent launch of the National Childcare Strategy, perhaps the time has come to look more positively at how the shrinking pre-school sector could be more creatively expanded to meet the considerable need for childcare that exists and will continue into the next millennium.

Good quality childcare is the key to delivering a wide range of policy objectives, whether this is raising educational standards, welfare to work, or engaging with those who are currently excluded from the mainstream of society.

Some of the neediest young children in our society do not get the chance to go to nursery or pre-school, but for them, and their parents, the chance to learn through play is an opportunity they cannot afford to miss.

In America this has been recognised with a very large investment in childcare and, in particular, with funding of \$27.1 billion (£16.1 billion) over five years for the Headstart programme that combines high quality nursery programmes with support and education for parents in deprived areas. All of the abundant research conducted on this type of programme shows that they work.

Britain has a rich and cost-effective supply of community nurseries, pre-schools and childminders which, together with local authority nurseries, could be built into a comprehensive early years service that parents in Britain could be proud of and trust.

But such a service needs proper investment in its infrastructure, training and in the people running it.

Helen Ford follows her son's progress at a Montessori school in the US

British parents were given an outline this week of preparations for the "baseline assessment" of children in their first school term. The recommended version covers eight areas, including basic literacy, numerical work and social development.

If that sounds daunting, parents should see what my six-year-old went through in his first year at an \$8,000-a-year Montessori school in New Jersey. It was with some trepidation that my husband and I attended a school "conference" with the teacher to check on his progress.

The word conference sounds forbidding and impressive, and its importance is such that the whole school closes down for two days. When we walked into the classroom, we were welcomed by the "board" of teachers, three for 21 students. They sat on one side of the

Now we are six -- assess!

desk, we on the other. I felt as if it was an interview for a high-powered position.

First, we were presented with a Lower Elementary Pedagogical Report, divided into subjects, all of which have a "sensorial" or "abstract" tick box. Maths involved numeration, linear counting, place value, concept of addition, static addition, dynamic multiplication, fraction nomenclature, fraction equivalences and so on. I pretended I knew what it all meant, but prayed that my son never asked me to help him with his homework.

We went on to Language.

Montessori differs from traditional schools in several ways. First, there is a three-year range per class: there is a community atmosphere and role playing to rule out problems; self-correcting materials rather than the teacher being the source of answers; an emphasis on learning about consequences, rather than punishments.

Students progress at an individual rate, so a child who is really interested in a subject is allowed to run with it. There are no formal seating arrangements, but there is a very structured classroom. The emphasis is on learning rather than on grades and lessons are an individual, not a group, basis. Progress reports are observation-based, not graded report cards.

I am happy to report that my son did well on his conference except for "response to authority" on which he scored a 2, denoting progress needed. Oops, that must have come from his father's side.

A CHILD'S PROGRESS	
MARKING CODE:	1 New presentation 2 progress needed 3 making progress 4 making rapid progress 5 proficient
NUMERATION	4
SENSORIAL / ABSTRACT	4
Linear counting	4
SENSORIAL / ABSTRACT	4
Place value	4
SENSORIAL / ABSTRACT	4
Concept of addition	4
SENSORIAL / ABSTRACT	4
Static addition	4
SENSORIAL / ABSTRACT	4
Dynamic addition	3
SENSORIAL / ABSTRACT	4
Addition memorisation	4
SENSORIAL / ABSTRACT	4
Addition word problems	4
SENSORIAL / ABSTRACT	4
Sub. word problems	4
SENSORIAL / ABSTRACT	4
Fraction nomenclature	4
SENSORIAL / ABSTRACT	4
Time	3
SENSORIAL / ABSTRACT	4
Money	4
SENSORIAL / ABSTRACT	4
Measurement	4
SENSORIAL / ABSTRACT	4
Verbal expression and articulation	4
Phonetic reading	4
Oral comprehension	3
Reading comprehension	4
Short vowel words	4
Blends	4
Digraphs	4
Long vowel words	4
Diphthongs	4

WORLD CUP TICKETS.

For an easy route to World Cup matches
— see next Monday's Times.



Happy together: children interact with each other in a playgroup

FLORA LONDON MARATHON

after 6 hours 1 minutes 25 seconds

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05:24:22 D. Barber 05:24:22 C. Chantani... 05:24:23 R. Harper 05:24:23 R. Harper... 05:24:24 M. Williams 05:24:24 M. Williams...

05:30:27 D. Hinchin 05:30:27 J. Cluzo... 05:30:28 M. Williams 05:30:28 M. Williams... 05:30:29 J. Williams 05:30:29 J. Williams...

05:35:31 J. Salas 05:35:31 J. Simon... 05:35:32 M. Williams 05:35:32 M. Williams... 05:35:33 J. Williams 05:35:33 J. Williams...

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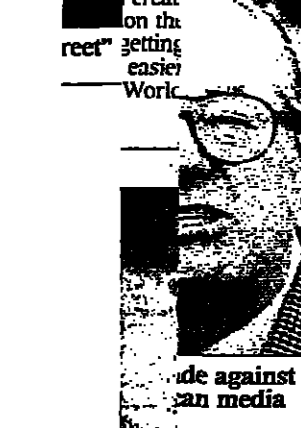
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White to play. This position is from the game Botvinnik - Padevsky, Monte Carlo 1968. How did White capitalise on his monster passed pawn on g7?



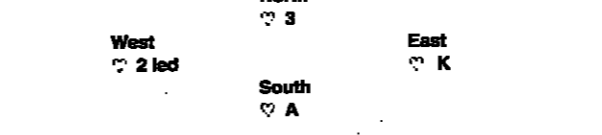
White to play. This position is from the game Botvinnik - Padevsky, Monte Carlo 1968. How did White capitalise on his monster passed pawn on g7?

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Begin Bridge with The Times: Lesson 3 - The Trick. After the cards have been dealt, there are two phases of the game: first the auction and then the play.

The unit of the play in bridge is the trick: the play proceeds trick by trick. A trick is a collection of four cards, one from each player. So how many tricks are there in a deal? Thirteen, because each player is dealt thirteen cards, and contributes one to each trick.



Order of play: West, North, East, South. Each player followed with hearts, as they all had cards in the suit; North played the three, East the king, and South the ace.

If you remember from Lesson 1, I said the rank of the cards within a particular suit is that the ace is the highest, followed by the king, queen, jack, then the remainder of the suit has its normal numerical order.

White to play. This position is from the game Botvinnik - Padevsky, Monte Carlo 1968. How did White capitalise on his monster passed pawn on g7?

WORD-WATCHING

- ARKSUTITE a. A chest for legal papers b. A fjord in Greenland c. Choral song by archangels
BUTYRACEOUS a. Butter-like b. A hunchbacked dinosaur c. One of even temperament
LOBSTERIZE a. To move backwards b. To be immobilised c. To make one's hand into a claw

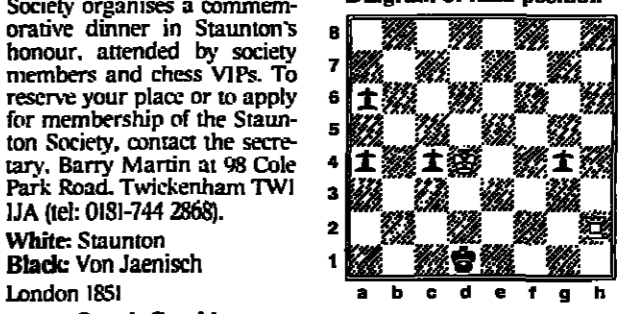
Answers on page 54

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Staunton remembered

Howard Staunton was not just a great chess player, but also a great writer, organiser and researcher. He launched the first ever international tournament, held at London in 1851, wrote a chess column in the Illustrated London News, edited a chess magazine, wrote numerous chess books, was a noted authority on Shakespeare and an expert on the British educational system.



Scotch Gambit

- 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 O-O Nxe4 5 Qe2 Qe7 6 d3 Nf6 7 Nxe4 Qe6 8 Bb5 Nc6 9 Bxc6 Nxc6 10 Qd2 Nf6 11 Nf3 Qd7 12 Bg5 Nf6 13 Bxf6 gxf6 14 Qd3 Bg7 15 Bg5 Bg7 16 Qd2 Qd7 17 Qc3 Nf6

WINNING MOVE

White to play. This position is from the game Botvinnik - Padevsky, Monte Carlo 1968. How did White capitalise on his monster passed pawn on g7?

Solution on page 54

RACING

Kingfisher Mill can justify Cecil's faith with winning return

By Richard Evans

SENTIMENTAL does not feature in the form book, but it is safe to assume the winner's enclosure at Newmarket will be awash with genuine joy if Kingfisher Mill justifies the hopes of Julie Cecil and lands the group two Sagitta Jockey Club Stakes this afternoon.



TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

The dark horse is Happy Valentine, a one-time Derby favourite, who did not race last year but showed his wellbeing by winning in Dubai in March. However, Kingfisher Mill can oblige here by his way to the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes.

It has created a favourable impression when winning over course and distance 17 days ago and the Robert Armstrong-trained runner looks more than capable of following up off an 8lb higher mark in the Lanwades Handicap (2.05).

The Kuwait Green Ridge Stables Newmarket Stakes (2.35), featuring six three-year-olds without a run this term, is not so straightforward. The unbeaten Dr Fong is a tentative choice to maintain his strike rate. However, that race is relatively simple compared to the fiendishly competitive Milcars Handicap (3.40), which has attracted 24 runners.

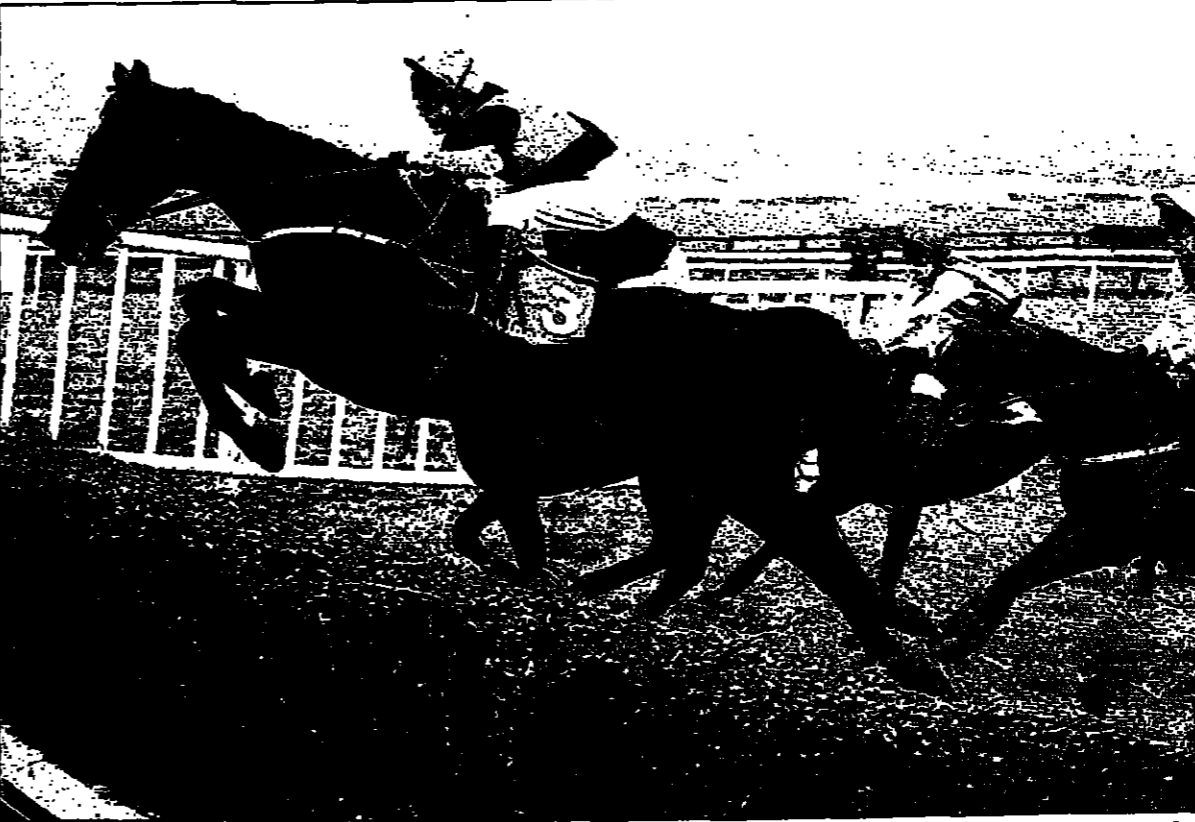
Silver Patriarch finished almost two lengths ahead of Kingfisher Mill in the Great Voltigeur Stakes at York last August, but the St Leger winner reposes on 5lb worse terms. Celtic, the Gold Cup winner, invariably needs his first run and, like Silver Patriarch, needs further.

Connery collects profit from banks

FROM CHRIS MCGRATH AT PUNCESTOWN

THERE is no sterner obstacle on the final day of Puncestown than the banks. Not the ones in Nass High Street, though some racers are probably involved in tense negotiations this morning, but those that comprise the meeting's very foundation stone.

For the banks course - featuring not just banks and double banks, but stone walls and other obstructions intended to simulate an authentic rural ride - was, once upon a time, the



Mahler puts in an impressive leap on his way to victory in the Heineken Gold Cup at Puncestown yesterday

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: JILA (2.05 Newmarket) NB: Kingfisher Mill (3.10 Newmarket)

main focus of the Puncestown Festival. Rather more important prizes have since clustered around it, such as those plundered yesterday by the Coswold riders, Zafarabad and Mahler. Nonetheless, the Queens of Balinglass Chase for the La Touche Cup does much to conserve the meeting's distinctive flavour. If that flavour tends to come in a glass, the horses certainly share the fun, and Risk Of Thunder confirmed his love of the course by romping to a fourth consecutive success in the race.

desperate mistourne of Adrian Maguire (whose season was ended by yet another injury on Tuesday), Johnson gave no quarter to the insistent attentions of Messrs Dunwoody and McCoy. In a finish of necks, Zafarabad responded with the utmost gameness, but Johnson had also excelled out in the country. David Nicholson explained: "He raced a bit free when beaten

horseman, Enda Bolger. "He's unbelievable," Bolger said. "I was pulling him up from a mile out. He'll go for the Velka Pardubicka in October, but I won't be able to do the weight, so I'll have to auction the ride."

He did not wait long for some persuasive bids, none so forceful as that of Richard Johnson on Zafarabad in the LAWS Champion Four-Year-Old Hurdle. Seizing the opportunity presented by the

the Ballymore Properties Champion Stayers Hurdle. Derrymoyle wrestling back a prize he had himself won twice previously. He was given a particularly deft ride by Tony McCoy, but not half so deft as that Paul Carberry gave Direct Route in the Tripleprint Novices' Chase. If he needs a man to be neither shaken nor stirred by a perilous mission to the Czech Republic, Connery need seek no further.

NEWMARKET

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Time. Includes races like 1.35 Karlyth, 2.05 Chabran, 2.35 Sensory, 3.10 Romanov.

GUIDE

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Time. Includes races like 103 (12) 04-02 GOOD TIMES, 2.35 KUWAIT GREEN RIDGE STABLES NEWMARKET.

3.40 MILCARS HANDICAP

Race card for 3.40 Milcars Handicap, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

4.50 SAGARO STAKES

Race card for 4.50 Sagaro Stakes, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

THUNDERER

Race card for Thunderer, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

2.35 KUWAIT GREEN RIDGE STABLES NEWMARKET

Race card for 2.35 Kuwait Green Ridge Stables Newmarket, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

4.15 EQUITY FINANCIAL COLLECTIONS DAMELIA STAKES

Race card for 4.15 Equity Financial Collections DameLIA Stakes, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

5.20 PORTLAND LODGE MAIDEN STAKES

Race card for 5.20 Portland Lodge Maiden Stakes, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

2.05 LANWADES HANDICAP

Race card for 2.05 Lanwades Handicap, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

3.10 SAGITTA JOCKEY CLUB STAKES

Race card for 3.10 Sagitta Jockey Club Stakes, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

7.30 HUNTER CHASE

Race card for 7.30 Hunter Chase, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

8.00 STANLEY HURDLE

Race card for 8.00 Stanley Hurdle, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

MUSSELBURGH

Race card for Musselburgh, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

4.00 ABERLADY MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES

Race card for 4.00 Aberlady Median Auction Maiden Stakes, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

6.00 DUDLEY CHASE

Race card for 6.00 Dudley Chase, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

8.30 DUNN HURDLE

Race card for 8.30 Dunn Hurdle, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

2.50 HADDINGTON LIMITED STAKES

Race card for 2.50 Haddington Limited Stakes, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

4.30 MUSSELBURGH OLD COURSE HANDICAP

Race card for 4.30 Musselburgh Old Course Handicap, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

7.00 GEORGE CARPENTER MEMORIAL HANDICAP

Race card for 7.00 George Carpenter Memorial Handicap, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Table listing course specialists and their performance records.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Table listing course specialists and their performance records.

5.05 BRUNTON HALL THEATRE HANDICAP

Race card for 5.05 Brunton Hall Theatre Handicap, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

7.00 GEORGE CARPENTER MEMORIAL HANDICAP

Race card for 7.00 George Carpenter Memorial Handicap, listing runners, jockeys, and odds.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Table listing course specialists and their performance records.

Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, featuring the name 'Christopher Sheffield' and other text, partially obscured by the page edge.

GOLF

Garland forced to weather the storm

FROM MEL WEBB AT CASTELCONTURBIA

EVERYTHING would be perfectly all right if it wasn't for the Alps. Bank after bank of misanthropic rain-clouds kept on marching up Italy yesterday from the direction of Sardinia and Corsica, threw millions of gallons of water on the golf course where they were trying to play the Italian Open, hit the mountains and dumped more of the wet stuff on their way back. The result: no golf and plenty of long faces.

David Garland, the tournament director, drew a halt at 3.30pm, seven hours after he had first suspended play. Bad weather is not entirely unknown on the European circuit, but the players had gone beyond even the limits of their legendary endurance by the time Garland put everybody out of their misery.

Garland, a normally jovial Scot, did his best not to resemble a drowned rat as he chased hither and yon. "The whole course is more or less under water," he said. "The fairways are bad and the bunkers are waterlogged. We will try again at 8.30 in the morning, although the greens will have to dry out a lot before we can cut them."

Tournament directors on the European Tour must possess a highly-developed sense of optimism. When Garland had addressed the troops earlier, he said that there was a chance of a window of dry weather in mid-afternoon. Somebody up there must have been listening, because the window remained steadfastly closed.

Garland consulted the Meteorological Office in Birmingham three times during the day, although one only had to walk a yard outside the clubhouse to know it was not only raining but it was also unlikely to stop in a hurry. The weather men suggested it might go on doing something similar for the next three days.

The prospects are not good. It had better stop soon if there is to be much golf here in the days to come. If it doesn't, send for Noah.

FOOTBALL: FA CHAIRMAN DENIES REJECTION WILL DAMAGE ENGLAND'S BID FOR 2006 WORLD CUP

Wiseman fails to attract backing for role with Uefa

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

KEITH WISEMAN, the Football Association chairman, last night dismissed fears that his failure to be elected to the six-man executive committee of Uefa will damage England's prospects of staging the 2006 World Cup finals. Wiseman was standing for a four-year term on European football's governing executive, but in the poll of 51 member states gathered in Dublin for the Uefa ordinary congress, the FA chairman gained only 16 votes, putting him eighth among the 13 candidates.

The six available places went to the outgoing committee, including Des Casey, of Ireland, and Wiseman was also knocked down the pecking order by Mircea Sandu, the Romanian FA president.

Wiseman said: "The main problem was that the six incumbents were standing and there were no actual vacancies. So if you're trying to get on as the new man you're probably going to need a vacancy to help you along. You can't argue with democracy."

Wiseman, 52, who has been the FA chairman since 1996, is still confident that England's 2006 bid will not suffer as a result, despite the political infighting with Germany. "I don't think it does it any harm whatsoever to be frank. It's not a cause for concern. We've known that, for various his-

torical reasons, some of the main Uefa representatives would not have supported us anyway, although I don't see it touching that at all.

"We believe we've got substantial support in the world as a whole. Obviously, the more Europeans that will vote for us when it comes to it the better. But we've always known, slightly unusually, that we were starting outside and working back in in terms of support, so it doesn't change that."

Wiseman has campaigned for England's direct participation at the heart of Uefa. "I would be more concerned on behalf of the country from England's point of view because it does mean that we continue to be the only major nation at this moment who are outside the loop — you only have to look at the finance figures to see who the big five are. We can't be happy with that."

Lennart Johansson, the Uefa president, has no problems with the Uefa congress electorate. He was re-elected unopposed for another four-year term. But he expected nothing else and his main concern is his campaign for the presidency of Fifa, the world governing body. Joao Havelange retires after 24 years in the role just before the World Cup finals this summer.

The Swede used the congress as a platform for his election campaign in the presence of Havelange, whose general secretary at Fifa, Sepp Blatter, is also standing in what has turned into a bitter power struggle.

Johansson said: "This result shows the unity of Europe. I know that our opponents will continue with their goal to split us, spreading uncertainty through rumours and false information. But, my dear friends, they will not. We have a clear objective that if Europe stays united, we will together with our allies in all parts of the world continue our goal and win the election in Paris on June 8."

The Italian League yesterday overturned a two-match suspension imposed on Ronaldo, reviving his chances of winning the Serie A goalscoring title and Internazionale's faint hopes of the championship. The Brazil striker was banned on Tuesday for criticising the referee during Inter's 1-0 defeat by Juventus in Turin last weekend. The disciplinary committee ruled that, because Ronaldo's comments were reported by an assistant official and not the referee, there were no grounds for suspension. The Chile striker, Ivan Zamorano, had his two-game suspension reduced to one match.



Havelange, left, and Johansson met in Dublin at the congress meeting of Uefa

SPORT IN BRIEF

Faldo still looking to recover lost form

ALTHOUGH Nick Faldo improved by 11 strokes on his previous competitive round, he still pronounced himself dissatisfied after an opening round of 72, one over par, in the Macau Open yesterday. Faldo's round of 83 in the MCI Heritage Classic two weeks ago was his highest in 219 US PGA Tour events.

Faldo is only three strokes behind the leaders but said: "I am not too impressed. How can you be pleased with a round that does not include a birdie?" Faldo did have an eagle, which helped to make up for three bogeys, but was not at ease with his putting.

MOTOR SPORT: Brabham, one of the most famous names in motor racing, could return later this year in the British Formula Three championship. A consortium says it has brought the rights to the name of Brabham, whose Formula One team was disbanded in 1992.

Sir Jack Brabham, three times world champion, has not been officially told of the plans. "The Brabham name is registered in Britain, Australia and America and anyone who wants to use it must have my permission," he said. "So if they say they are running as Brabham Racing, I will be challenging that."

ROWING: The British women's eight, bronze medal-winner in the 1997 world championships, will race American college crews on Lake Windermere, Seattle, tomorrow. The May Day race between the British and French men's eights on the Seine today has been cancelled due to flooding and floodwater has caused the cancellation of Walfingford Regatta this weekend.

TABLE TENNIS: Andrea Holt, the England No 2, went out of the first round of the European championships in Eindhoven yesterday, beaten 21-17, 21-17, 19-21, 21-8 by Liu Xia, of Holland. A stomach illness forced Nicola Deaton, the England No 3, to withdraw, while Helen Lower, of Wolverhampton, pulled out with a leg injury.

BADMINTON: Kelly Morgan, the first British singles player to reach a European final since 1990, has been rewarded with a significant rise in her world ranking and can look forward to an improvement in her funding, following her success in Sofia. Morgan, already the highest-placed British singles player since computerised rankings began seven years ago, has climbed three places to twelfth.

RACKETBALL: Neil Smith and Shannon Hazell, world doubles champions since 1992, have retained their title by the narrowest of margins, beating Willie Boone and Peter Brake 7-6 in the best-of-13-game challenge. Trailing 4-3 after the first leg at Clifton College, Boone and Brake won three out of the first four games in the second leg in Newport.

Walker parts company with Norwich again

BY RICHARD HOBSON

MIKE WALKER might reflect on the adage "never go back" after leaving Norwich City as manager yesterday for the second time in four years. While his initial departure, for a similar post at Everton in 1994, infuriated supporters, the latest exit prompted sadness rather than anger among fans.

His contract was terminated with immediate effect and John Faulkner, the coach, will take charge of the team for the final game of the season, against Reading on Sunday. "The way things have gone is bitterly disappointing. We came to a decision mutually, so now I am history," Walker said.

Last Saturday, in what became his final game in charge, Walker supervised a 5-0 victory against Swindon Town to ensure that the club stayed in the first division of the Nationwide League. On Sunday he received the backing of directors at a supporters' forum.

Such results have been the exception, however. In mid-season Norwich went 14 games without a win and the depressing run included a 5-0 defeat against Ipswich Town, their fierce rivals. It cannot have helped Walker's standing that Ipswich are involved in the play-offs for a place in the FA Carling Premiership.

Walker, who took Norwich to third place in the Premier League and into the Uefa Cup during his first spell, acknowledged that he expected the side to feature in the top eight this season. Injuries to key young players, such as Darren Eadie, who is expected to leave during the summer, have mitigated against him.

Advertisement for Ferrari 328 GTB. Includes text: 'WIN A CLASSIC FERRARI 328 GTB', 'ENTER FOR THE SPANISH GRAND PRIX TODAY', 'RESULTS OF THE SAN MARINO GRAND PRIX', 'MAKE THREE SELECTIONS FROM EACH OF THE FOUR GROUPS BELOW', 'FANTASY FORMULA ONE 24-HOUR ENTRY LINE: 0891 40 50 01'.

Blackburn's youth policy starts to pay dividends

BY NICK SZCZEPANIK

THE first leg of The Times FA Youth Cup between Blackburn Rovers and Everton, at Ewood Park tonight, pits one emerging youth set-up against another that has already begun to bear fruit.

Although none of Blackburn side has yet graduated to Roy Hodgson's FA Carling Premiership squad, they have an excellent recent pedigree in the competition. They were losing semi-finalists last year and their continuing success at this level (under-18) underlines the club's desire to shed its image as big spenders on established talent at the expense of its own products.

"It's good, not just for the prestige of the club, but for the progress of the players," Robert Kelly, the Blackburn youth coach, said. "We want to win it, but it's also a great development aid. We'll get to know about the temperament of



some of them." Both legs are being screened live by Sky Television, which Kelly relishes. "When they get into the first team, they've got to cope with having the cameras on them all the time."

Strangely, the surroundings for the home leg tonight may be as daunting to the Rovers players as to the visitors: youth team games are usually played away from clubs' home grounds in front of a handful of spectators. "They're not used to playing at Ewood Park; most have only played

Zola likely to miss Cup Winners' final

GIANFRANCO ZOLA, the injured Chelsea forward, is likely to be out of action for the rest of the season and is expected to miss the Cup Winners' Cup final against VfB Stuttgart in Stockholm on May 13. Zola has returned home to Italy, where he is hoping specialists will be able to restore him to fitness in time for the final after he damaged a groin muscle in the 4-1 win over Liverpool last Saturday.

However, his manager, Gianluca Vialli, does not expect him back at Stamford Bridge until late next week. "It is going to be very difficult for him," he said.

"It's going to be a great shame for him if he misses a big match like this one. It's very important for us, of course, and very important for him — not least because he wants to show the manager of Italy that he is good enough for the World Cup squad," Vialli said.

Steve McManaman, the Liverpool forward, will miss

Forest Green wait to stamp title deeds

NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL BY WALTER GAMMIE

FOREST Green Rovers still need a point to secure the Dr Martens League title and promotion to the Vauxhall Conference, despite their 3-1 victory over Merthyr Tydfil in front of a crowd of 2,891 that shattered the ground record at The Lawn on Wednesday night.

Added spice to the finishing rights of a duel that has enthralled all season is that the last fixtures see Forest Green play hosts to Bath City, fierce local rivals eager to impress Paul Bodin, their new manager, while Merthyr play at Ashford Town, who are already relegated from the premier division.

Frank Gregan, the Forest Green manager, said: "It's absolutely in our hands. If we don't do it, we will have let ourselves down. It doesn't matter if Merthyr win 15-0 on Saturday, if we get a point we will be champions. It's a position we want to be in."

manager, said: "When we were on the coach after the match on Wednesday, the lads were a bit down but I told them we still got everything to play for. I've known stranger things happen on the last day of the season."

Forest Green's character has, however, already withstood the fierce examination from Merthyr on Wednesday. They had gone into the match all too aware that Merthyr had beaten them 4-0 at Penydarren Park on Easter Monday, a scoreline that helped to give the Welsh side a crucial advantage in goal difference that keeps their hopes alive.

"Come what may, we've had a magnificent season," Addison said. "After the problems the club has had over the last year, if somebody back in August had offered the chance for Merthyr Tydfil to still be involved on the last day of the season, I would have snapped their hand off."

Handwritten text: 'هكذا من الأصل'

Vertical sidebar containing various sports-related text and advertisements, including 'Brown a hurry for Surrey', 'CRICKET', 'BASEBALL', 'BASKETBALL', 'FOOTBALL'.

CRICKET: OPENING PAIR STRIKE OUT TO LAY FOUNDATIONS FOR COMFORTABLE VICTORY

Brown in a hurry for Surrey

By JOHN STERN

THE OVAL (Surrey won toss; Surrey (2pts) beat Gloucestershire by seven wickets

THE ease with which Surrey won this match, with 15 balls to spare, will alarm those who do not sport the Prince of Wales feathers. Apart from an irresponsible reverse sweep by Alec Stewart and a couple of dropped catches, this was a consummate one-day performance.

Saqin Mustaq, the Pakistani off-spinner, was fit and available for selection but did not make the XI. The strength and form of this Surrey side is formidable so he was allowed more time to reacquaint himself. The only two matches that Surrey have failed to win this season were rain-affected but perhaps they should enjoy it while it lasts because the international summons are sure to be plentiful, and David Grayveney was here to watch.

Alistair Brown, the only member of the England side that won the Sharjah Cup in December who was not selected for the one-day series in the West Indies, did not harm his case for inclusion in the squad for the forthcoming Texaco Trophy.

His and Stewart's approach in pursuit of the target of 267 was predictable, as was the execution. Brown, whose innings of 74 came from only 68 balls, took 16 off the fifth over from Jon Lewis, who was hit for four sixes in all, three by

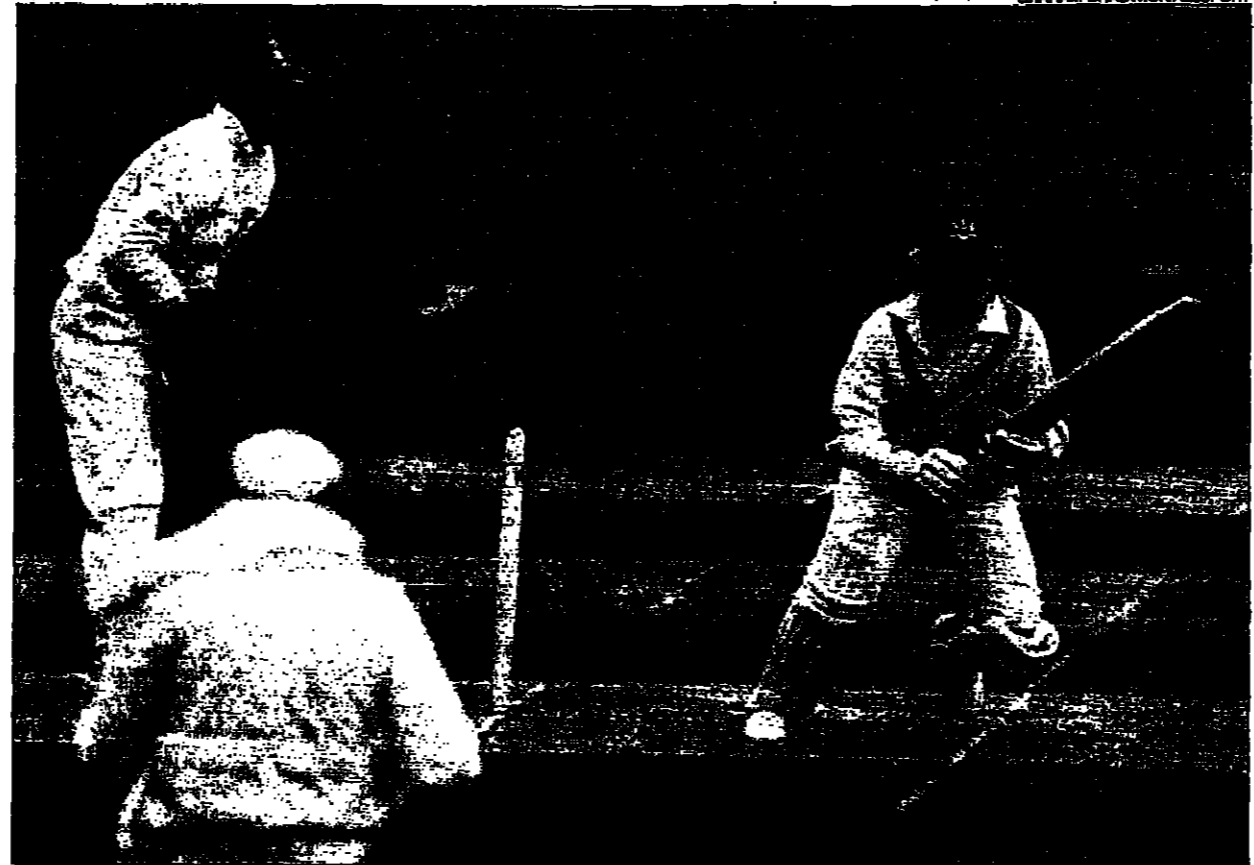
Brown and one late on by Adam Holloake. Courtney Walsh did not escape, either, although his tormentor was Stewart, who twice shuffled across his stumps to drive exquisitely through mid-wicket.

Stewart's departure was unedifying. He tried to reverse sweep a full delivery from Martyn Ball off middle stump and missed. Still, there was no need to worry because Graham Thorpe played one of those unassuming innings when he seems barely to be trying yet the scoreboard is constantly being adjusted. He arrived in the twelfth over with the score on 88 for one and left in the 44th at 239 for three when Tony Wright took a fine catch at extra cover.

Thorpe's most memorable strokes were a push for four off Lewis, which appeared to require little effort, and a pull in front of square off Walsh that brought his fifty.

One felt for Jack Russell, whose enterprising 83 anchored the Gloucestershire innings yet was ultimately overshadowed by the brazen hitting of his opponents. Russell, sent in after the fall of the first wicket, Nick Trainor, in the sixth over, began with some typical histrionics, dancing down the wicket to Martin Bicknell and generally trying to disturb the bowlers' equilibrium.

He was in for ten before his score reached dou-



Russell, of Gloucestershire, hits out on his way to an innings of 83, his highest Benson and Hedges Cup score

ble figures but once he decided to play properly he was highly effective, slashing at anything wide of off-stump and always looking for a single or a second run.

In contrast to Robert Cuffie, whose half-century contains no boundaries, Russell was more content to push into the gaps and harry the fielders. He hit only four boundaries in his 83, which took him 129 balls, before being caught at long-off by Nadeem Shahid off Ben Holloake in the 48th over.

Although the younger Holloake took three wickets, he had a forgettable day with the ball and struggled with his length. He also had Bobby Dawson dropped twice in the same over, once by his brother and once by Benjamin, although both chances were tricky.

Cuffie fell to the medium-pace of Mark Butcher, whose eight overs went for only 30. Gloucestershire's middle order all chipped in with valuable contributions to take their side from 176 for two at 40 overs to 266 for seven. Mark Alleyne, the captain, swept a six off Ian Salisbury in his unbeaten 24 and Lewis cleared the extra-cover boundary with a magnificent drive off Ben Holloake in the penultimate over.

Student spin causes panic

By BARNEY SPENDER

TAUNTON (Somerset won toss; Somerset (2pts) beat British Universities by two wickets

THE British Universities may have managed a mere four wins in 47 matches in the Benson and Hedges Cup but they came close to a fifth as their two spinners, Greg Loveridge and Michael Davies, caused an extraordinary Somerset collapse yesterday.

With the match reduced to 20 overs a side, Somerset appeared to be cruising to a target of 128 as Michael Burns and Graham Rose made light

of the early loss of Simon Ecclestone to add 98 in 12 overs. Rose, swinging with the ease of Eric Els, clubbed in James Lawrence for two big sixes while Burns raced to his 50 off 36 balls with a six and seven fours.

Then, out of nowhere, came the collapse that saw four wickets go for two runs. After a brief recovery, Somerset then found themselves 119 for eight and it took a couple of hefty blows from Adrian Pierson to scramble them over the finishing line.

Loveridge, a leg spinner capped once by New Zealand, set things rolling by removing Rose, for 28, and Rob Turner in the twelfth over, which was a double-wicket maiden. In the next over, Davies, a slow left armer on Northamptonshire's books, bowled Richard Harden. It still seemed just a minor glitch but when Loveridge bowled Burns, the gold award-winner, for 55, off his pads, it began to take on a more serious hue.

Parsons and Trescothick both panicked and were stumped while trying to charge Davies, whose four overs brought him three for 11. The drama continued as Bowler fell leg-before to Rob Martin-Jenkins before Pierson, dropped by Lawrence off a difficult return chance, saw them home.

That there was any play at all was remarkable for at the time of the scheduled start, ducks were waddling over the puddled outfield.

The Universities, made up entirely of students from Cambridge, Durham and Loughborough, reached 127 thanks to a mature innings from Mark Cuffie, who made 46 not out from 43 balls.

SCOREBOARD FROM THE OVAL

Table with columns for Gloucestershire and Surrey, listing players, runs, and wickets. Surrey won by 7 wickets.

SCOREBOARD FROM TAUNTON

Table with columns for British Universities and Somerset, listing players, runs, and wickets. Somerset won by 2 wickets.

Grace and favour for Diana

By SIMON WILDE

MCC yesterday announced two star-studded teams to contest the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial match at Lord's on July 18. Every player is a Test cricketer, and all nine Test-playing countries are represented in the MCC and Rest of the World teams, which are captained respectively by Michael Atherton and Sachin Tendulkar.

Belated acknowledgement has been made to the fact that the game, a 50-overs contest under one-day international rules, falls on the 150th anniversary of the birth of W.G. Grace. The teams will compete for the W.G. Grace Trophy, donated by Waterford

Crystal, and a Grace exhibition will be on show in the museum from May 28 until the end of the season.

MCC hopes Grace's granddaughter, Primrose Worthington, 92, will attend the opening ceremony. It is planned that three other relatives — all great-granddaughters living in Virginia — will be present.

Atherton leads a side containing Azharuddin, Ganguly,

Donald, McGrath and — if fit — Warne. Tendulkar's team includes Jayasuriya, Saeed Anwar, Aravinda de Silva, Hick and Wasim Akram. Warne's presence must be doubtful as his bowling shoulder requires treatment and Kumble stands by.

The only similar gathering of multinational talent was the MCC bicentenary match of 1987. "We think we have

assembled the best two teams ever brought together for a one-day match at Lord's," Roger Knight, the MCC secretary, said. "We have not considered cricketers contracted to English counties that have a match on the day and have limited ourselves to two players from the South African and Sri Lankan touring sides. We are absolutely delighted with the response we have had from the players."

British Airways will carry the players to England free. Most seats have been sold and MCC is hoping for live coverage on television, radio and the Internet. Proceeds, expected to be around £1 million, will go to the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund.

DIANA MATCH TEAMS

MCC: M.A. Atherton (England), Aamer Sohail (Pakistan), S. Chandrasekhar (West Indies), M. Atherton (India), S.C. Ganguly (India), B.M. Makharia (South Africa), A. Healy (Australia), S.K. Warne (Australia) or A. Kumble (India), D. Seneviratne (Sri Lanka), A. Donald (South Africa), G.D. McGrath (Australia). Umpires: D.R. Shepherd and S. Venkatraghavan.

REST OF THE WORLD XI: Saeed Anwar (Pakistan), S.T. Jayasuriya (Sri Lanka), S.R. Tendulkar (India), P.A. de Silva (Sri Lanka), G. Hick (England), M. McGrath (Australia), A. Flower (Zimbabwe), L. van der Pligter (South Africa), Wasim Akram (Pakistan), M. Waqar (Pakistan), I.R. Bishop (West Indies).

FOR THE RECORD

Table listing various sports records including Baseball, Basketball, Cricket, Golf, and Tennis.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

Table listing today's fixtures for Cricket, Football, and other sports.

Large advertisement for Heineken Cold Filtered Lager Beer. Features a can of beer, a glass, and the slogan 'GET 8 FREE'. Text includes '24 x 440ml cans Heineken Cold Filtered. Was £20.40. Now only £13.60.' and 'THRESHER Guaranteed to bring a smile to your lips'.



Think shrink to widen enjoyment

Ten years ago, when he was 56, Farel Bradbury suffered a stroke. He had hardly ever played golf and so it was surprising that his determination to regain his health would enable him to invent a form of golf that could spread the Royal and Ancient game to people who have been unfamiliar with it and to places where hitherto it had seemed impossible to play.

had indications that golf courts would be eligible for National Lottery money if local authorities wanted to try and build them," John Sale, of Golf Courts Incorporated, said.

After his stroke, Bradbury, a systems engineer, found that the right size of his body was so frail that he could not lift a teaspoon, never mind use it.

He tried all sorts of recovery techniques, including acupuncture, massage, osteopathy and hot steam baths. Within a month he could walk a mile.

His most dramatic improvement was to come when a remedial physiotherapist said that golf would be good for him because it would stretch the long muscles of his right side.

Bradbury began to go to Hereford Municipal Golf Club to learn to hit the ball. "I could not get the club past the impact position at first," he said, "and so I had to learn to protract after impact. I discovered that if you push

JOHN HOPKINS



Golf Commentary

was not woodland. By ignoring some of the basic tenets, he was able to play 18 holes.

"Bob Hope has four holes in his garden," Bradbury said. "So did I. We broke all the rules but remember that in the days of gaslight, electricity was considered to be outlandish. We have 40 per cent more golf per acre than a conventional course. We have

country golf. Bradbury's invention bears little resemblance to the Old Course at St Andrews. Do not think that after playing on it you will feel as though you have tamed Turnberry or conquered the New course at Sunningdale.

But it takes up little space, can be built for £200,000, excluding the cost of the land, and, as long as there is enough

space, can include par-fives as well as par-threes and par-fours. It is not a lengthened pitch-and-putt course. It requires the use of most of the clubs in a bag.

"We have had enquiries from the south of France, South Africa, Jersey, Japan, Malaysia, Vietnam, Korea, Taiwan, Costa Rica and the US," Sale said. "We are talking to David Leadbetter, who believes they are good for teaching. The plan is to bring golf to places where it has not been available before."

It could be one of the most significant developments in the game for some years.

'A golf court needs only about eight acres of land'

A golf court, as Bradbury's invention is known, can offer a round of golf, of a sort, on a parcel of land as small as eight acres, anywhere where small parcels of ground lie unused. It would suit people with tight schedules, allowing them to play for an hour before or after work.

Interest in golf courts has come from local authorities attracted by the idea of providing a cheap and simple form of golf on a small site and the Professional Golf Association, which wants to spread golf into new areas. "We have also

yourself to the limit of pain ten successive times, then on the eleventh you will actually move forward."

Next to his house in Ross-on-Wye was an eight-acre field and, stimulated by the speed of his recovery and the pleasure he was receiving from playing golf, Bradbury set to work. With the help of Adrian Clifford, the professional at Ross Golf Club, he laid out four holes on the six acres that

'You can plot your own route from tee to green'

walking and, as there is only one match on a court at any time, no time is lost waiting for the group in front to hole out."

A golfer used to playing on a conventional course will be astonished at a golf court. Though there are fairways, you can plot your own route from tee to green. You drive from the same tee and play to the same green several times, though from different angles. In other words, it is like cross-

SNOOKER: WORLD CHAMPION RIDES LUCK TO TAKE EARLY LEAD IN SEMI-FINAL

Fortune amassed by Doherty

By PHIL YATES

KEN DOHERTY established a flattering 6-2 lead over Mark Williams as their best-of-33-frame semi-final got off to an intriguing, if error-strewn, start at the Embassy world championship in Sheffield yesterday.

The Dubliner, attempting to become the only first-time winner of snooker's most coveted trophy to return to the Crucible Theatre and successfully defend the title, had breaks of 45 and 42 in the opening frame. It was to prove his only comfortable win of the session.

Doherty, defeated on three of his previous five meetings with Williams, stole the second on the pink, after laying a fendish snooker on the blue, and added a scrappy third on the green. Ironically, he then spurned his best break-building opportunity of the afternoon.

Leading 34-0 in the fourth frame, and occupying prime scoring territory, Doherty jawed a straightforward red. Williams replied with a decisive contribution of 71 before also prevailing in a low-scoring sixth frame.

In between, though, Doherty had snatched yet another frame from his grasp. He cleared green to black to level the scores at 47-47 and Williams, who dramatically edged Stephen Hendry 10-9 on a respotted ball in the final of the Masters two months ago, was on this occasion denied by one.

The closing two frames of the session merely served to increase the Welshman's frustration.



Ebdon's perceived triumphalism at the table has earned him criticism at the world championship in Sheffield

In the seventh frame, Doherty presented him with a free ball; Williams chose the yellow but unluckily suffered a kick that caused a simple pot to go astray.

Doherty slotted in the last red from distance and deftly cleared the colours to take the frame on the black. He repeated that feat in the eighth, after requiring two snookers. This

time, Williams had nothing to blame for missing another routine yellow other than a loss of concentration.

While the length of the encounter softened the blow for Williams, Doherty remains a strong favourite to advance and provide the final barrier between John Higgins or Ronnie O'Sullivan and the £220,000 first prize.

Despite his less than pleasing overnight situation, it was a refreshing experience for Williams to find himself in a match in which the atmosphere, while understandably tense, was not charged by the confrontational demeanour of his opponent.

During a 10-9 win over Quinten Hann in the first round, Williams was irritated by the behaviour of his Australian rival and annoyed by that of a group of Hann's supporters. Yet it paid into insignificance against the need that soured his 13-11 victory

over Peter Ebdon in the quarter-finals. It was a contest that will be best remembered for Ebdon's extraordinary triumphalism at the end of the ninth frame.

"He's psycho," Williams, who smiled at the outburst that followed Ebdon's green-to-black clearance to steal the ninth frame, said. Having reduced his arrears to 5-4,

Scores.....53

Ebdon, with total disregard for the Higgins-John Parrott quarter-final progressing on the other side of the dividing curtain, bellowed: "Come on!" Punching the air, Ebdon then stormed from the arena with his face screwed up by fierce determination. Williams was later admonished by the referee, Jan Verhaas, for mockingly raising his hand in salute after potting an ac-

ademic red in the next frame. Thereafter, the ill-feeling was all too apparent.

Ebdon, who was runner-up to Hendry in the 1996 world championship, is a model professional. Intelligent, smart, well-mannered and a devoted family man, he is an ambassador of which snooker can be proud.

That said, he does himself no favours by such emotive explosions at the table. It is a trait that first surfaced when he fought back from 4-2 down to defeat Hendry 5-4 in the quarter-finals of the 1995 Masters at Wembley. Then, as now, it earned him much criticism.

Ebdon, who invariably sits rigidly in his chair staring into space, refuted the suggestion that he has become too intense. "I don't think it's possible to try too hard because that's the way I need to be. I've got such burning desire," he said.

CYCLING

Brite ready to shine again

CHRIS NEWTON'S return to racing in the Travelwest four-day tour of Lancashire today, after a spell of inactivity

caused by flu, puts the Brite team back to full strength. The squad now includes three previous winners of the event - Newton, who triumphed in 1996, John Tanner, 1994, and Jon Clay, the captain, 1992.

Chris Lillywhite, of Harrods, twice a winner of the event, is missing from the 100-rider line-up. He has been given a clean bill of health after surgery on a broken shoulder and will be in the Great Britain team in the Tour of Slovenia.

The organisers have given a late place to Colin Sturgess, who is back in Britain and racing again after four years in Australia and is aiming to be selected for the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur later this year. Jeremy Hunt, of Baneris, the national road-race champion, who is based in France, was another late entry for the race last night.

Colin Docker, one of ten directors of the executive board of the British Cycling Federation, resigned yesterday after details of a new national team Jersey were issued, he claimed, without reference to the board.

Few people have seen the controversial jersey, but the former dominant use of red, white and blue is said to have been replaced by lime green.

TELEVISION CHOICE

Sartorial spice for six

Style Challenge BBC1, 10.05am

Have you ever wondered what happened to the Wall-to-wall supermodels? They were born in a blaze of publicity 14 years ago, the only all-girl supermodels in the world. Now the *Liver Birds* have reached the age when they want to start experimenting with different styles to find an image to suit their differing personalities. John Leslie summons up a posse of experts on hair, cosmetics and clothes to make the change from conventional school uniform to, hopefully, streetwise chic. While their parents cheer them on from the audience, Lucy, Kate, Hannah, Ruth, Jenny and Sarah cruise the range from "Rash Spice" crop-top and trainers to a sleek black trousers suit. We're told that only one of the teenagers has a boyfriend - perhaps their new look will change all that.

Lion Country BBC1, 2.10pm, except Scotland

Can this really be the end of a series which has run for 55 episodes and given such a lift to afternoon viewing - not to mention a splendid plug for Lord Bath and Longleaf? It is indeed time to say goodbye to Paul Henry and crew, and tonight vet Gerry Benbow is seen doing his final rounds of the safari park. After 31 years of looking after the lions, Longleaf is retiring and the safari keepers see to it that he gets a grand send-off, complete with a framed photograph of... well, try to guess. Lord Bath tours his estate outlining his plans for the future of the grounds and it's the wedding day of Ian Turner and Cathy Hillman. They've chosen Horningsham Chapel - will there be lions in attendance?

Wild About The Garden: Seashore Channel 4, 8pm

You might think that of all the unpromising sites for a garden, the rugged wind-blown reaches of the British seashore are the worst. But, as she has done with all her programmes (the series is now halfway through) Carol Klein, by coaxing the natural order of things rather than going against it, proves you wrong. How for example do you combat the salt that settles on leaves? The fact that any nutrients in the soil tend to get washed away by the tide, that



Vet Gerry Benbow retires (BBC1, 2.10pm)

sand is infertile and rocks even more so? Yet as various seaside gardeners attest, certain flowers and colourful weeds do very well - lavender, sea hollies, desert yuccas and seabast among them. Carol shows that given sandy soil even urban gardens can play host to many of these delightful plants. The programme ranges from Dorset and Devon in the South West over to the Norfolk coast and into suburban London.

Father Ted: Going to America Channel 4, 9.30pm

What, leave the cosy confines of Craggy Island for the Resposps of California? It looks for a terrible moment as if that is exactly what Father Ted (Dermot Morgan) is contemplating when a smooth-talking American priest, impressed by the way Ted has persuaded a no-topper, Father Kevin, from jumping off a cliff, offers to let Ted stay in his house. Of course it never crosses the minds of Ted's groupies - Father Jack, Father Dougal (Ardal O'Hanlon) and Mrs Doyle - that they won't be coming with him and a bedraggled lot of flags at half-mast when the bitter truth is out. Can Ted forsake them? Need you ask - and of course for the very saddest of reasons, Morgan's recent and unexpected death, all the fun and inventiveness of the series ends with this episode. Elizabeth Cowley

RADIO CHOICE

Youth Brass Band of the Year Radio 2, 9.30pm

A brave Controller it is who puts brass bands on the air in mid-evening. This new BBC competition comes to the championships at the semi-final stage and those who associate brass bands with old men in draughty halls in the northern latitudes will want to think again after hearing some of the thoroughly modern offerings tonight. Indeed, some in the brass band business could be accused of overdoing the attempts to seem "modern" (we are promised Spice Girls arrangements in this series) but on the whole, brass bands have stayed very much in tune with the times without forgetting their community roots. Tonight's contestants are the West Lothian Schools band and the Smithills School band from Bolton, introduced by Frank Renton.

RADIO 1

6.30am Chris Moyles, 9.00 Simon Mayo, 12.00 Jo Whiley, 2.00pm Mark Radcliffe, 4.00 Dave Pearce, includes 5.45 Newsbeat, 6.00 Peter Tong's Essential Selection, 8.00 Judge Jules, 11.00 Westwood, 1.00 Rap Show, 2.00am Fabio and Grooverider, 4.00 Charlie Jordan

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy, 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan, 9.30 Ken Bruce, 11.30 Jimmy Young, 1.00am Graham Thorpe, 3.00 and 5.00 John Peel, 6.00 John Peel, 7.30 and 9.30 Friday Night is Music Night, 9.15 Scoop, 9.30 Radio 2 National Youth Brass Band of the Year, See Choice 10.00 David Jacobs, 10.30 The Arts Programme, 12.00am Charles Nove, 4.00 Jackie Bird

RADIO 5 LIVE

6.00am The Breakfast Programme, 9.00 Nicky Campbell, 12.00 Midday with Mai, 2.00pm Ruocco on Five, 4.00 Nationwide with Julian Worlock, 7.00 News Extra, 7.30 Alan Green's Sportsack, 8.30 Friday Sport, David Cotes introduces coverage of the night's action, including the semi-finals of the world snooker championship and a look ahead to the weekend's racing, 10.00 Late Night Live, including Paperstak, sport results and the Financial World Tonight, 1.00am Up All Night with Richard Dwyer

VIRGIN RADIO

7.00am Chris Evans, 10.00 Russ Williams, 1.00pm Paul Coyte, 4.00 Robin Barter, 7.00 Johnny B's Beats of Steel, 11.00am Jay Lee, 8.00am Howard Pearce

TALK RADIO

6.30am Kirsty Young with Bill Overton, 9.00 Scott Chesham, 12.00 Louise Kelly, 2.00pm Tommy Boyd, 4.00 Peter Daley, 7.00 Sportszone, 10.00 Mike Allen, 1.00am Mike Dickinson

RADIO CHOICE

Late Tackle Radio 4, 11.00pm

I have given this new sports show a couple of weeks to get its teeth worn in and I now feel confident enough to suggest giving it a try. Martin Bashir is best known for his interview with Diana, Princess of Wales for *Panorama*; from that to this may seem a long distance but it is all journalism and Bashir, who still plays at scrum half for Wimbledon Strollers, brings a very journalistic ear to *Late Tackle*, a change from the optimism of some sports programmes. The format of having studio guests brings the obvious risk that the programme will only be as good as the guests, but that is to some extent obviated by a willingness to overturn the agenda in order to deal with late-breaking subjects. Peter Barnard

WORLD SERVICE

7.00am News, 7.15 Insight, 7.30 Pick of the World, 8.00 News, 8.15 On the Spot, 8.30 Music Review, 9.00 News, (648 only) News in German, 9.10 Focus for Thought, 9.15 Westway, 9.30 John Peel, 10.00 News, 10.05 World Business Report, 10.15 The Learning World, 10.30 On the Brink, 10.45 Sports Roundup, 11.00 Newsdesk, 11.30 Assignment, 12.00 Newsdesk, 12.30pm Focus on Faith, 1.00 News, (648 only) News in German, 1.05 World Business Report, 1.15 History Today, 1.45 Sports Roundup, 2.00 Newshour, 3.00 News, 3.05 Outlook, 3.30 Multitrack, Alternative, 4.00 News, 4.05 Football Extra, 4.15 Beyond the Millennium, 4.30 Science in Action, (648 only) News, 4.35 World Business Report, 4.45 World Service, 5.00 News, 5.05 Britain Today, 6.00 News, 6.15 Insight, 6.30 The New Europe, News in German, (648 only) 6.45 Sports Roundup, 7.00 Newsdesk, 7.30 Focus on Faith, 8.00 News, 8.05 Outlook, 8.35 Multitrack, Alternative, 9.00 News, 9.05 World Business Report, 10.15 Britain Today, 10.30 People and Politics, 11.00 Newsdesk, 11.30 Insight, 11.45 Sports Roundup, 12.00 News, 12.05pm Outlook, 12.30 Multitrack, Alternative, 1.00 News, 1.30 From the Weeklies, 1.45 Britain Today, 2.00 Newsdesk, 2.30 Beyond the Millennium, 2.45 Short Story, 3.00 Newsday, 3.30 People and Politics, 4.00 News, 4.05 World Business Report, 4.15 Sports Roundup, 4.40 Insight, 4.45 On the Spot

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Breakfast with Basky Nick Bailey presents music for the morning, 8.00 Henry Kelly, Michael Barry prepares pineapple milkshake. Plus, High Flyer and Record of the Week, 12.00 Lunchtime Requests, Jane Jones plays favourite music, 1.00am Concerto Classics, 1.15am News, 2.00am News, 2.15am News, 2.30am News, 2.45am News, 3.00am News, 3.15am News, 3.30am News, 3.45am News, 4.00am News, 4.15am News, 4.30am News, 4.45am News, 5.00am News, 5.15am News, 5.30am News, 5.45am News, 6.00am News, 6.15am News, 6.30am News, 6.45am News, 7.00am News, 7.15am News, 7.30am News, 7.45am News, 8.00am News, 8.15am News, 8.30am News, 8.45am News, 9.00am News, 9.15am News, 9.30am News, 9.45am News, 10.00am News, 10.15am News, 10.30am News, 10.45am News, 11.00am News, 11.15am News, 11.30am News, 11.45am News, 12.00am News, 12.15am News, 12.30am News, 12.45am News, 1.00am News, 1.15am News, 1.30am News, 1.45am News, 2.00am News, 2.15am News, 2.30am News, 2.45am News, 3.00am News, 3.15am News, 3.30am News, 3.45am News, 4.00am News, 4.15am News, 4.30am News, 4.45am News, 5.00am News, 5.15am News, 5.30am News, 5.45am News, 6.00am News, 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SPORT

SNOOKER 54
Champion Doherty rides his luck at The Crucible



CRICKET 53

Russell's tenacity fails to save day for Gloucestershire



Tuning up: Ian Wright leads the chorus as Arsenal record their FA Cup Final anthem yesterday, profits from which will aid youth and sporting charities in North London. Photograph: André Camara

Wembley turn-off as tickets fail to sell

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

CROWDS in the JJB Super League may be booming this season, but the Silk Cut Challenge Cup final, rugby league's traditional big day out in London, is proving less of an attraction. The attendance at Wembley for tomorrow's final between Wigan Warriors and Sheffield Eagles is expected to be the lowest for 40 years.

A crowd of 65,000 is predicted — 10,000 below capacity — and, for the first time in a decade, tickets will be on sale at the ground until kick-off.

Sheffield might have broken the mould by getting to the final after 14 years' existence, but the fledgling club has a long way to go to breaking football's stranglehold in the city. Half of its allocation of 14,500 tickets remains unsold.

During Wigan's golden period, when they won eight consecutive Challenge Cup finals between 1988 and 1995, tickets sold like hot cakes, yet this year even a few hundred of their allocation remain — probably because they are overwhelming favourites to win the cup.

Wembley, sold out for seven of the past ten finals, has also halved the price of executive boxes, and 30,000 leaflets have been distributed at London football clubs in an attempt to drum up support for what was once seen as the great "northernness" occasion.

The Rugby Football League (RFL) has had to spend £25,000 marketing the final for the first time. Peter Rowe, the RFL spokesman, said: "It's no secret that Salford have a larger support base. If they had got to the final rather than the Eagles, it would have sold more, but great efforts have been made by Sheffield, which is in a development area, up against soccer."

Crowds in the Super League are up by 15 per cent on last season. The last time the Wembley crowd fell below 70,000 was in 1958, when Wigan beat Workington Town.

Rich seam, page 51

England football captain denies deliberately kicking Leicester City opponent

Shearer facing trial by video

By DAVID MADDOCK



Shearer attends to Lennon after the alleged incident

ALAN SHEARER, the England captain, yesterday launched a robust defence of his motives in an incident in which he appeared to kick an opponent in the face. Shearer was accused of kicking Neil Lennon, the Leicester midfielder, in the match on Wednesday evening, and television pictures are so powerful that the player now faces an inquiry by the Football Association, which has indicated that it is prepared to use video evidence against the Newcastle United forward.

Martin O'Neill, the Leicester manager, was incensed after witnessing the incident, and Lennon himself said bluntly: "Shearer kicked me in the face, and I have the marks to prove it." The television pictures appear to support his assertion.

But Shearer, in a statement issued yesterday by Tony Stephens, his agent, denied the allegations. "I have never seen the television pictures of the incident and I am amazed how bad it looks by comparison to what actually happened. I was brought down by Neil Lennon over by the touchline and we both fell clumsily."

"As I tried to get to my feet I had to really tug my left foot free and the momentum of doing this looked on television like a kick. It certainly wasn't and the fact that Neil is virtually unmarked confirms this. If I did accidentally catch him, I certainly did not mean to. I would never try and deliberately hurt a fellow professional."

Last night, a spokesman for the Football Association said it would wait for the referee's

report before considering any further action. "It is fair to say that we would use video evidence if we felt the incident warranted such action, but at the moment we must wait for all the relevant reports."

Privately, the FA concedes that intent is a difficult motive to prove and that unless the match observer had a clear view of the incident and is prepared to pass comment, no further action will be taken.

If he is punished, then Shearer will be banned, but it would not take effect until the start of next season, allowing him to play in the FA Cup Final on May 16. The use of video evidence is not without precedent, and Shearer could yet find himself facing sanctions. In 1988, Paul Davis, of Arsenal, was banned for nine matches after cameras caught him breaking the jaw of Glenn Cockerill.

More recently, Ian Wright, Julian Dicks and Patrick Vieira have been condemned through video evidence, but it is clear that Shearer intends to argue a lack of intent. Kenny Dalglish, the

Newcastle manager, also defended Shearer: "The two of them just fell, the momentum carried Alan over. There was no malice, no intention. I've never seen him do anything to injure anyone deliberately. He is competitive, not vindictive in any way, shape, or form. This is not the first time he has been criticised, and it's not the first time people have been wrong, is it? He doesn't want

Johansson re-elected 52
Norwich sack Walker 52

preferential treatment. But he doesn't want to be punished because of who he is."

The incident is the latest in a series of allegations levelled against the Newcastle centre forward recently. He was accused by George Graham, the Leeds United manager, of "virtually assaulting Jimmy Hasselbaink", and was accused of intimidatory tactics and unfair play by Barnsley during an FA Cup tie.

Yesterday, the allegations went further. Christian Gross,

the Tottenham Hotspur manager, accused Shearer of breaking the nose of Ramon Vega, the Tottenham centre half, during a Premiership match against Newcastle last Saturday.

"Shearer is very physical, and his elbow broke Vega's nose," Gross claimed. "It was a heavy challenge, it had to be, because Ramon is very strong. Shearer is a clever player and he uses his body very well. Referees in England let more things go than in other countries."

Shearer has struggled to find his true form since returning from a serious ankle injury recently, and it could be that the player's frustrations have got the better of him. According to Professor Cary Cooper, though, it is the frustration the player feels from playing in a poor Newcastle side that may have affected his disciplinary side.

"I feel Shearer is under tremendous pressure, it must be depressing playing for a team that is below par," the sports psychologist from UMIST said. "Even for the

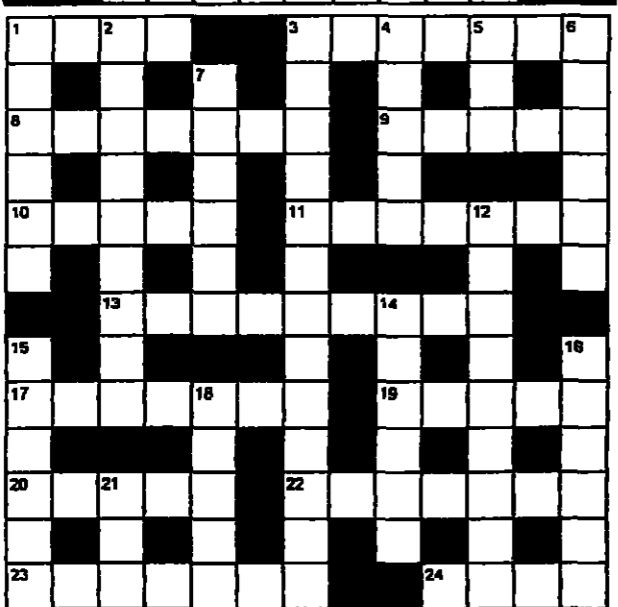
most honourable of players it can be too much."

Whatever Shearer's problems, it is a worry for Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, who knows that any disciplinary slackness will be punished severely during the World Cup finals that begin in France in June.

Dennis Bergkamp, the Arsenal forward, believes that he will be fit enough to play in the FA Cup Final against Shearer, despite a hamstring injury sustained on Wednesday evening against Derby County.

Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, feared that the injury would require a three-week rest, but Bergkamp said: "It does not feel so bad, I will give it some rest, and I think I should be all right to play in the final."

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1394

ACROSS

- 1 Mild illness: unresponsive (4)
- 3 Initiated (into combat) (7)
- 8 Metal ore: type of water (7)
- 9 WH —, poet (5)
- 10 Separated (5)
- 11 Very bad; very deep (7)
- 12 Pains-taking (9)
- 17 Instrumentalist: crab (7)
- 19 To fish; Nordic giant (5)
- 20 Take steps in light of (3,2): a historian (5)
- 22 Bank clerk; dismiss (officer) (7)
- 23 Rank of Josephine; of Victoria in India (7)
- 24 Cathedral town (4)

DOWN

- 1 Instrument for clashing (6)
- 2 Help out (4,1,4)
- 3 Double security (esp. for trousers) (4,3,6)
- 4 Egg-cell-producing organ (5)
- 5 Achieved; tricked (3)
- 6 Bounce (baby) on egg knee (6)
- 7 The noblest Roman of them all (J. Caesar) (6)
- 12 Italian fascist leader (9)
- 14 Stupid; 90°-180° (angle) (6)
- 15 Obliterate (6)
- 16 Sudden gust (of snow, activity) (6)
- 18 Jousting's weapon (5)
- 21 Summit (3)

SOLUTION TO NO 1393
ACROSS: 1 Invigilate 8 Acronym 9 Knife 10 Clip 11 Verbiage 13 Foyer 14 Capers 16 Chat show 17 Pith 20 Lucid 21 Painter 22 Armageddon
DOWN: 1 Isaac 2 Varsity Match 3 Gene 4 Lumber 5 Take back 6 Disappointed 7 Meteor 12 Crusader 13 Fickle 15 Hoop-la 18 Heron 19 Fine

Medical chief backs Fina view

By CRAIG LORD

THE amount of whiskey found in the urine sample provided for drugs testers by Michelle Smith was strong enough to have killed her, the president of the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) medical commission claimed yesterday.

Weighing in on the side of Fina, the international governing body for swimming, in the case against Ireland's triple Olympic swimming champion, Prince Alexandre de Merode, said: "The alcohol level was so high that you could not survive with that concentration. That's strange; that normally indicates manipulation."

Smith, 28, stands accused of manipulating a urine sample that she provided at her home in Co Kilkenny, Ireland, in January. The report on the test from the IOC laboratory in Barcelona also suggested, according to Smith, the "administration of some metabolic precursor of testosterone", the hormone associated with maleness that, in certain concentrations, is listed as a banned substance.

Speculation as to how the whiskey may have made its way into the urine sample was rife yesterday. Medical experts told *The Times* that methods exist, and have been used by athletes in the past, that would enable a would-be cheat to manipulate a urine sample, despite the obligatory presence of a drug-test observer when the sample is provided.

One method would be to insert a catheter into the penis or a condom into the vagina containing a foreign substance, or old urine, the contents of which would be emptied into the sample vessel without the observer being able to notice.

De Merode's view that alcohol could be used to mask the presence of other drugs in a sample was backed by medical opinion, though one expert said that the heavy concentration suggested in Smith's sample could well serve to preserve other substances.

Gunnar Werner, honorary secretary of Fina, has said that

if Smith cannot prove her innocence, she could be banned for life under swimming rules that allow punishments for manipulation to be set at the discretion of its doping panel.

Responding to Smith's determination to fight her corner "all the way" to the International Court of Arbitration for Sport, Werner said: "It's a normal reaction. If she is going to fight all the way, we have to find out if the B sample

confirms this." The B sample must be tested by May 18, and Smith has a right to be present when the analysis is carried out.

However, her solicitor, Peter Lennon, did not respond to enquiries by *The Times* yesterday as to whether his client had requested the B sample to be tested.

The speculation over Smith was fuelled by her massive improvement in form leading up to her three Olympic victories in Atlanta in 1996 and the presence of her coach and husband, Erik de Bruin, a former discus thrower for Holland, who served a four-year suspension after failing a drugs test.

Brian Smith, the swimmer's father, told Irish radio yesterday: "The people of Ireland can rest assured that Michelle is now the victim of a series of mistakes by certain people in Fina... there is still no evidence against Michelle." He said the case was "making our lives quite, quite unbearable."

Additional reporting: Audrey Magee



Smith: new claim

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